Paul the Traveler and Missionary

By
WALTER ALBION SQUIRES, B. D.

The Westminster Textbooks of Religious Education
Intermediate Department, Second Year, Part II

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SCALE OF MILES
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Longitude East from Greenwich
15° 20° 25° 30° 35°
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THE GREAT SEA
(MEDITERRANEAN)
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Syrtis Major
TRIPOLIS
LIBIA
EGYPT
ARABIA
SYRIA
CYRENAICA
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Rome
Three Taverns
Appii Forum
Puteoli
(Naples)
Brundusium
Rhegium
Syracuse
Melita (Malta)
SICILY
ITALY
DALMATIA
MOESIA
THRACE
MACEDONIA
ILLYRICUM
Dyrrachium
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Constantinople
BITHYNIA
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Halys
PONTUS
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MYSIA
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Athens
Corinth
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Iroquium
CARIA
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Antioch
Iconium
Lystra
Derbe
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LYCAONIA
Tarsus
COMMAGENE
CILICIA
Antioch
Seleucia
Miletus
LYCIA
Perga
Attalia
Myra
Patara
Rhodes
RHODES
Cos
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CYTHERA
CRETE
Salome
Phenice
CLAUDA
Lasea
Fair Havens
Paphos
CYPRUS
Salamis
Sidon
Tyre
Ptolemais
Caesarea
Lydda
Samaria
Jerusalem
JUDAEA
IDUMAEA
GALILEE
PHOENICIA
Damascus
Cyrene
Alexandria
(Cairo)

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The Westminster Textbooks of Religious Education for Church Schools having Sunday, Week Day, and Expressional Sessions

Edited by JOHN T. FARIS, D.D.

WITHDRAWN

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Preface

GENERAL PLAN OF THE WESTMINSTER TEXTBOOKS OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The Westminster Textbooks of Religious Education aim to unify the educational program of the individual church by furnishing a graded course of study suitable for Sunday-school classes, week-day church-school classes, and expressional organizations. The lessons are so constructed as to make the Sunday sessions largely devotional and the week-day sessions largely informational. Suggestions are given for an expressional meeting in which pupils discuss the application of the truths they have learned to their own life problems. In these meetings they also plan for various forms of Christian service, without which mere information and formal devotion are devoid of any great religious values.

Churches planning to use these textbooks will need to provide for one hour of religious instruction on week days, in addition to their Sunday program. In the Primary, Junior, and Intermediate Departments of the Sunday school, the Westminster Textbooks will replace the lesson materials heretofore in use. The expressional work of the Westminster Textbooks will supplant the usual topics in the Junior and Intermediate Christian Endeavor Societies, or new organizations will be formed to have charge of this phase of the educational task of the church.

The lessons in this series of textbooks may be used in the week-day classes independently of the Sunday school. In this case, however, there will be no correlated and unified program for the educational activities of the church.

In carrying out the plan it is desirable that, so far as possible, the same teachers be in charge in all three sessions of the church school. Where this is impossible, there should be one efficient supervisory Board or Committee of Religious Education, and an efficient superintendent, for the whole program.

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SUGGESTIONS CONCERNING THE GOAL OF THE LESSONS IN THIS VOLUME

Paul is one of the most heroic characters of history. It is to be regretted that his wonderful life has so often been presented in a fragmentary way, so that pupils have not caught the tremendous sweep of his personality. The author has tried to bring the whole of Paul's life into a panoramic view, and to describe his career and his personality in such a way as to make the lessons interesting to Intermediates. He realizes that the ultimate success of the lessons rests with the teacher. Lesson materials count for about ten per cent of successful teaching, while the personality and skill of the teacher count for sixty-five per cent or more.

The teacher must make the great apostle live in the presence of the pupils. She must do more; she must lead her pupils through the experiences of Paul in such a way that they, in a measure, experience what he experienced. In no other way can the lessons be made truly educative; that is, in no other way will they certainly bear fruit in life and conduct.

The teacher should be in touch with sources of information far wider than it was possible to include in this volume. The following books will be useful for the teacher of the course: "St. Paul the Traveler and the Roman Citizen," by Ramsay; "The Student's Life of Paul," by Gilbert; "The Christian According to Paul," by Faris.

SUGGESTIONS CONCERNING THE WEEK DAY SESSION

The week-day session is intended to be the main informational period of the correlated school. It is highly desirable to have trained teachers for this part of the work, and in most communities they should be paid. Classes can usually be much larger in the week-day sessions than they are in the Sunday sessions. The week-day teacher should make frequent reviews, so as to be sure that both the week-day lesson material and the Sunday lesson material are being mastered by the pupils. If necessary, arrangements should be made for repeating lessons if they have not been mastered. This will be possible because the lessons are not limited to any time schedule.

Suggestions are given for notebook work in connection with each week-day lesson. The teacher should use such of these suggestions as meet the needs of the class and should invent other forms of notebook work which will supplement the regular lessons and add interest to the course. All the pictures mentioned may be secured from the W. A. Wilde Company, 120 Boylston Street, Boston, Massachusetts. The numbers refer to the catalogue lists of the company named.

SUGGESTIONS CONCERNING THE SUNDAY SESSION

The Sunday session of the correlated school is chiefly responsible for training the pupils in worship. Wherever possible, lesson materials suitable for the accomplishment of this end have been selected for the Sunday lesson. The attainment of the desired goal will depend largely upon the departmental superintendent and the teachers. If possible, each department should meet by itself. An opening service may thus be built around the lesson theme for the day. Songs may be selected which are in harmony with the lesson materials.

Every effort should be made to secure and maintain a spirit of reverence and devotion throughout the whole of the Sunday session. Intermediate pupils are old enough to be given a large share in the service of worship, and it is highly desirable that this privilege be given to them. Pupils may be asked to read the Scripture, take up the offering, lead in prayer, and in other ways assist in the service.

The teacher of the Sunday session ought to be familiar with the materials presented to the pupils in the week-day sessions and the program to be carried out in the expressional meeting. It is only thus that the desired unity can be attained in the pursuit of the course. The Sunday teacher ought to have the privilege of reviewing the week-day lesson and of using the questions which are found in the material for the expressional meetings. The pupils will be all the better prepared for the expressional meeting if they have discussed these questions with their Sunday teacher.

Each Sunday lesson contains a lesson prayer. Many teachers use these prayers for a brief period of worship at the beginning or close of the lesson period. Teachers may compose other prayers, or ask pupils to do so, and the pupils should be encouraged to offer extemporaneous prayer. The classroom worship may thus be made an agency, next in power to the family altar, for training the devotional life.

Each Sunday lesson contains a suggestion for a supplemental missionary story. These stories are all found in "The Book of Missionary Heroes," by Basil Matthews. This book should be in the teacher's hands. The stories may be told by the teacher and the pupils asked to take notes. Another good plan is to assign the stories to pupils in advance and have the stories told by the pupils. Thus during the course a great deal of missionary information may be given to the pupils and the general missionary interest awakened will be quite in harmony with the study of the life of Paul.

SUGGESTIONS CONCERNING THE EXPRESSIONAL SESSION

The expressional meeting is of great importance. In this session the pupils learn spiritual initiative and self-expression. By carrying out the program of activities planned in the expressional meetings, pupils make the truths which they have learned a part of their daily life and conduct. The superintendent of the expressional sessions has, therefore, a task of utmost importance. So far as possible, the expressional session should be carried on by the pupils themselves. This is their meeting, in which they plan to put into effect what they have learned in the other sessions of the church school.

It is recommended that the expressional meetings, whenever possible, should be organized as Christian Endeavor societies. There is distinct value in being thus connected with a great national organization and in being a part of a community organization of young people such as a Christian Endeavor Union. The using of topics other than those prepared for the Christian Endeavor Society in no way makes it necessary for the expressional organization to be independent of the Christian Endeavor movement.

For the convenience of the leader of the meeting and the superintendent of the organization, the material for the expressional session is grouped under certain heads. First comes a brief and suggestive study of some passage of Scripture bearing on the topic for the meeting. This is intended for the opening talk by the leader of the meeting. Then come some definite statements concerning the truths learned in the Sunday and week-day sessions. These statements are offered as illustrations. It is expected that the superintendent and pupils will formulate many others.

The review questions will help to tie the expressional session to the other sessions and will prepare the minds of the pupils for the meeting by refreshing their memory of what has been studied. These questions may be used

in a variety of ways, which will suggest themselves to the trained teacher or superintendent.

The Bible verses have some direct bearing on the topic and ought not to be merely read by pupils. Verses should be assigned to pupils before the beginning of the meeting so that they will have time to study them and become prepared to speak on the themes suggested.

The study topics ought to be taken up as one of the main parts of the session. They aim to bring the truths taught into direct contact with the life problems of the pupils. It will be found best to assign these topics some time before the beginning of the expressional meeting. Some will require considerable investigation and a few will require correspondence with Boards of the Church. These ought to be assigned long enough in advance to enable pupils to make preparation. By glancing ahead at the lessons the superintendent will be able to determine what topics should be assigned a considerable time in advance. If pupils have given the topics no previous study and merely express such thoughts concerning them as happen to come into their minds on the spur of the moment, the topics will miss the object for which they were intended.

The leading truth of each lesson is expressed in the form of a law. It is believed that some such definite expression of the truth will be helpful to the pupils. Moreover, pupils are given opportunity to subscribe to each truth and to enter into expressed resolutions concerning the truth. This may be made a solemn taking of an obligation, if the teacher has the skill to impress the pupils with the seriousness of the matter. These obligations should never be taken by pupils in a thoughtless or irreverent manner.

It is intended that the class carry on a program of activities which will be a practical expression of the truths they have found and to which they have promised allegiance. Conditions differ so widely in different communities that specific directions for this project work cannot be given. The author has offered in each lesson, however, a few suggestions which serve to illustrate what the superintendent should undertake.

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CHAPTER I

BOYHOOD IN TARSUS

WEEK DAY SESSION

PAUL'S HOME TOWN AND HIS FAMILY

Acts 21:37-39; 22:22-28; Phil. 3:5, 6

Most people enjoy reading biographical narratives. Biographical literature possesses what we call human interest; that is, it tells about the labors and achievements of people who, although they reached places of distinction beyond most of their fellow men, were after all a good deal like the rest of humanity in their experiences and their characteristics. No part of a biography is of more importance, or of greater interest to the thoughtful reader, than that part which tells of the early life of the individual whose life story is recorded in the narrative. This part of a biography is important because the habits of life and the elements of character which make a person truly great in maturity always have their beginning in the years of boyhood or girlhood. It has been truly said that back of every great man is a great mother. It is also true that back of every great-souled man lies a great-souled boy, and that back of every great-souled woman lies a great-souled girl. Boys and girls who in their youth are mean-spirited do not suddenly change into adults quite unlike the persons they have been all through the years of youth.

In this book we are to study about one of the greatest men of history. He was a man who was truly great because he was great of soul. It is our task to find out in what respects Paul was great in character and how it happened that he grew into the kind of man he was. In this chapter we are to find out all we can concerning the kind of boy Paul was. Unfortunately, we are not told much about the boyhood of Paul, but here and there we find statements in the New Testament which help us

to form a fairly reliable conception as to the character of Paul in his boyhood years.

Tarsus, the City in Which Paul Was Born. The eastern arm of the Mediterranean Sea is like a great parallelogram bounded on the south by Africa, on the east by Palestine and Syria, and on the north by Asia Minor. Near the northeastern corner of this extension of the Mediterranean Sea lies the city of Tarsus, the birthplace of Paul. The city is not far from the sunny, southward-facing shore and back of it rise the Taurus Mountains like a great wall shutting out the cold northern winds and giving the whole region a climate which is delightful. In Paul's day the city lay on both sides of the Cydnus river, a clear stream which comes down from the mountains and empties into the sea a short distance southwest of Tarsus.

The soil about Tarsus is remarkably fertile and fields of wheat and barley stretch from the suburbs of the city away to the foot of the Taurus range. Within the city are extensive groves of orange, lemon, and pomegranate trees. On the foothills of the mountains are some of the finest apple and cherry orchards to be found in Asia Minor. The surroundings of the city were much the same in Paul's time as they are now. The same mountains darkly clad in forest growths rose against the northern skyline. The same sparkling sea rippled along the sandy shore just south of the city. Doubtless the same kinds of trees were cultivated within the city and fields of grain surrounded it then as now.

Tarsus was an ancient city even in the days of Paul. It was then more than a thousand years old. It is mentioned in an inscription made in the time of the Assyrian king, Shalmaneser II, who conquered Cilicia in 833 B. C. Since it was one of the chief cities of the region in the days of the Assyrians, it was probably several centuries old at the time when it was taken by Shalmaneser.

Tarsus has always been an important commercial center. The great highways of commerce and travel center there. In the days of Paul vessels of seagoing proportions could ascend the Cydnus to Tarsus, so that the city was a seaport as well as a center for the overland

trade routes. Paul thus grew up in a city which was in touch with all the world that was known at that time. Caravans from Egypt came up the highway along the coasts of Palestine and Syria through Tyre and Sidon and Antioch around the northeastern corner of the Mediterranean Sea to Tarsus. Phœnician ships called there on their way to the distant lands of the west. Traders from the Euphrates valley brought their goods across the deserts to the markets of Tarsus. Herders and farmers from the Taurus Mountains and the regions beyond came hither driving their flocks and exchanging their produce for goods of Persian, Egyptian, or Phœnician manufacture.

Tarsus was a center of learning. Greek schools of philosophy, the universities of that day, flourished there. Paul grew up in the atmosphere of a university town. Education was held in high esteem by the city of his birth. Perhaps this is one reason why Tarsus was the cradle of a good many men who climbed to places of distinction as teachers, philosophers, poets, and authors. Nearly a dozen famous men besides Paul were born in Tarsus, or received their boyhood training there.

Loyal to the Old Home Town. We may be sure that Paul was, as a boy, intensely loyal to the city of his birth. He never lost his sense of loyalty to his native city. After he had been away from Tarsus for many years he was one day mobbed in the city of Jerusalem by his enraged Jewish brethren who charged him with having profaned the Temple. Paul was rescued from the mob by a band of soldiers, led by the Roman captain who was stationed in the Temple to keep the peace in just such times of popular tumult as had now arisen. This centurion thought that Paul must be a certain Egyptian outlaw who had before made much trouble in the country. Thus accused by his enemies of having broken the Jewish law by profaning the Temple, and suspected by the centurion of being an outlaw bandit, Paul straightened himself up before the Roman centurion and looking him in the face said, "I am a Jew, of Tarsus in Cilicia, a citizen of no mean city." As a boy Paul had developed that spirit of loyalty which says, "This is my own, my native land."

The Jews of the Dispersion. By the beginning of the first century, the Jews had become scattered over all the known world. Some had gone out from Palestine to engage in trade among Gentile peoples. Some had been carried away as captives and their descendants had continued to live in the land of exile. These Jews who were scattered over the portions of the world outside of Palestine were called the Dispersion. For the most part they clung tenaciously to the religion of their forefathers. Wherever there were enough of them in a city or town, they built a synagogue and there they worshiped Jehovah on their Sabbath Day. They read the Law of Moses in their Sabbath worship and it was the textbook for their synagogue schools. In time most of the Jews of the Dispersion ceased to speak or understand the language of their ancestors. Most of them came to speak the Greek language. They still kept up the reading of the Law, however, and they employed a rabbi who was able to read the Law in the ancient tongue and to explain it to them. After a time some of the Jews living in Alexandria translated the Old Testament into Greek so that the Jews of the Dispersion after that time had their Bible in a tongue that they could understand. Paul's family belonged to the Jews of the Dispersion. We may, therefore, think of him as speaking the Greek language in his boyhood and attending a synagogue school where he committed to memory long sections of the Greek translation of the Old Testament. The language spoken by the Jews of Palestine of that day is called Aramaic. Paul may have learned to speak it as a boy or he may have learned it after going to Jerusalem to attend school there.

Roman Citizenship. In the first century it was a great advantage to any person to be counted a citizen of the Roman Empire. Not all of the people living under the government of Rome were citizens of Rome. Indeed, the number of Roman citizens was comparatively small. The group of Roman citizens consisted of the descendants of the people who had been the founders of the city which had conquered the world, of certain others who had been honored with the gift of citizenship for some distinguished service which they or their city had performed

for the Roman Government, and of a few others who had been able to secure the prize through political trickery or by outright purchase. Paul's family were citizens of the Roman Empire. How they secured this honorable distinction we do not know. It seems likely that it had been bestowed upon Paul's father or some of his ancestors further back as a reward for distinguished service. Paul often spoke of his Roman citizenship and sometimes used it to save himself from insult and to defeat the designs of his enemies. He seemed in a way proud of the fact that he was a citizen of Rome. We may believe, therefore, that this distinction had been won in a worthy manner by some one of his forefathers.

Greek Civilization. The Greeks had brought to the world a golden age of art, poetry, and philosophy. Their architecture, sculpture, and literary works had never been equaled in the history of the world, and have hardly been surpassed in the centuries which have followed them. In the days of Paul's boyhood the glory of Greek art and culture was still vivid and it must have been especially so in a city like Tarsus. Paul was thus brought into contact with influences which were powerfully educative in every way. Early contact with Greek learning helped him to develop the ability to think clearly, deeply, and logically on the greatest themes that have ever engaged the thought of mankind.

A Pharisee of Pharisees. And yet neither Roman citizenship nor contact with Greek culture had lessened in the least the loyalty of Paul's family to the religion of the Jews. They were all the more devoted to Jehovah their God because their minds had been widened by contact with the big world in which they lived. Paul in one of his letters describes himself as "a Pharisee, a son of Pharisees." He means that he and his family belonged to that section of the Jewish people who were intensely loyal to the law of Moses and who believed that in keeping its every precept they could arrive at a true and satisfying righteousness. His family were not Herodians, crafty politicians who were self-seekers and who were willing to compromise religious matters to almost any extent in order to gain preëminence and power. Neither

were his relatives Sadducees, materialistic philosophers who denied the future life and the existence of the soul and who as a consequence lived lives devoid of noble ideals. Paul's relatives were Pharisees, intensely loyal to all things Jewish, hoping for the establishment of the Messianic Kingdom which God had promised to David, but not without an admixture of self-righteousness and narrowness which made them bitterly intolerant toward all who happened to differ from them in matters of religion. So there were some advantages and some serious disadvantages in the religious background of Paul's life.

Called of God from the Day of His Birth. When Paul was in the midst of his great life task of bringing the gospel to the Gentiles, he one day wrote to the people of a church which he had organized telling them that God had "separated . . . and called" him to this work from the very day of his birth. As Paul looked back over the days and years of his childhood, youth, and manhood, he was convinced that there was a Power which had been directing his life from its very beginning and fitting him for the work in which he was then engaged. The home life in Tarsus, the contact with Greek learning, the training in the synagogue schools, the experiences of his young manhood and of his later years, all seemed to Paul to have been so planned as to give him a fitness for the task to which he was giving his life. Paul could not believe that this was mere chance; he believed that the hand of God had guided his life. Most people whose lives really count for anything of lasting value have reached the same conclusion that Paul reached. They have come to know that they were working under that all-knowing Intelligence which we call Providence and God. It is a good thing for boys and girls to reach this understanding at an early age so that they may know how to yield their lives fully to the divine guidance and coöperate fully with their Creator in the life task to which his wisdom has assigned them.

Suggestions for Notebook Work

Have pupils draw an outline map of the countries surrounding the Mediterranean Sea. This map may be drawn

in their notebooks or larger maps may be made for the wall. These maps should be on good paper and drawn in ink, as they are to be used throughout the course. Locate on the map the city of Tarsus, the Taurus Mountains, and the highways leading to Tarsus. Have pupils write a letter, such as Paul might have written at the age of twelve, to a boy friend who had gone from Tarsus to attend the great school of the rabbis in Jerusalem. Frontispiece picture: St. Paul, by Fra Bartolommeo, No. 452.

SUNDAY SESSION

PAUL'S EARLY EDUCATION

Acts 18:1-4; Rom. 1:8-17

Most of the people who became followers of Jesus during the days of his ministry were not highly educated. None of the twelve apostles had received what would correspond in our day to a college education. They could probably all read and write but none had attended, so far as we know, any institution of higher learning which was like the colleges and universities of our times. Paul, however, was a highly educated man. He had been taught in the best schools of the Jewish people and had come into contact with the Greek culture and the Roman civilization of his time in a very intimate way. We do not know that he ever attended a Greek school of philosophy, though he may have done so, and we have evidence that he was acquainted with Greek literature, at least to a certain extent. In this lesson we are to learn about the earlier years of Paul's student life, the years which he spent in the schools of Tarsus, before he went up to Jerusalem to attend the great schools of the rabbis.

The Synagogue School. In a city like Tarsus there was always a school connected with the Jewish synagogue and it is certain that Paul received his first instruction in such a school. He probably entered the synagogue school at about the age of six and attended it for six or seven years. Here Paul would learn to read and write the language of his father and mother. In some

cases this might be Greek; in other cases it might be Aramaic, the language spoken by the Jews living in Palestine. The pupils of the synagogue school likewise received some instruction in the rudiments of such subjects as arithmetic, but the great subject of instruction was the Law of Moses, and other parts of the Old Testament. There was a great deal of memorizing. The teacher alone had a book, for books were too expensive to be placed in the hands of the pupils. The teacher would read or repeat from memory some Old Testament passage, usually some extract from the Law of Moses. The pupils would repeat the words after their teacher. This was kept up day after day until the pupils came to know, and to be able to recite, page after page of the Old Testament Scriptures. They memorized not only the Law of Moses but also some of the interpretations of the Law which had been made centuries before by the great teachers of the Hebrew people.

The kind of school which we have described would not be thought very admirable in our day but it had some points in its favor. It gave the pupils a wide and thorough knowledge of the Bible as it then existed. This was of great use to Paul in his life work. Indeed, we must believe that he would have been unfitted for his life task, if he had not had this extensive knowledge concerning the subject matter of the Old Testament.

Choosing a Life Task. Everything indicates that Paul was a studious boy. He evidently delighted his teachers for he certainly mastered the subject matter of the Old Testament and that was what his teachers desired more than anything else. Paul took to learning so naturally that we are not surprised to find that he decided to give his life to teaching. He decided to become a rabbi. From the time of this decision, he would be planning to continue his education in some institution of higher learning. Very naturally he would turn his thoughts toward Jerusalem. The greatest schools of his race were there. Jerusalem was for him and his family a sacred city, the chosen dwelling place of Jehovah, the God of the Jews, the site of the great Temple which marked the center of the Jewish religion and the Jewish nation.

Learning a Trade. Since no rabbi of that time could depend upon his teaching for a living, it was necessary for every teacher to have some other means of earning an income sufficient to support himself and his family if he were to have a family. Consequently boys who expected to become rabbis learned some trade whereby they could support themselves either wholly or in part. Paul chose the trade of a tentmaker, that is, he learned how to make a kind of coarse haircloth out of which the tents of that time were made. Cilicia was noted for this industry. The cloth made in Tarsus was manufactured out of the hair of goats and seems to have been highly prized among the many tent-dwelling tribes which were scattered over the semiarid districts bordering upon Cilicia. It was a most fortunate thing for Paul that his parents were wise enough to insist upon his learning a trade. His life work led him into many situations where it would have been very difficult for him to make a living had he not had this one thing which he could do to earn money. It is a good thing for young persons to do as Paul did, that is, to attain a skill in some trade or occupation. Such a skill will be a lifelong advantage and enable them to assume an independence which hardly any other possession can insure. Paul could go almost anywhere and be reasonably sure that if he ran out of money he could quickly secure employment. Tent-making was an industry something like shoemaking, or shoe-repairing in our times. Practically every town or city had its tent-manufacturing industry.

Learning to be a tentmaker was something more than a convenient acquisition for Paul. It was an important element in his education. It is thought that the Jewish boy usually completed the synagogue school at about the age of thirteen. If he went on to a higher school, he usually began this further study at about the age of fifteen. So it is probable that Paul worked for some two years before going away to school. This experience would be very helpful to him. It would make him acquainted with the people who toil with their hands. He would learn to look at life and its problems somewhat from the point of view of the workman of the streets. As

we study the life of Paul, we shall see that he had a remarkable ability to win all sorts of people. He could speak to a throng of cultured Athenians, the most highly educated people of the day, and he could meet them on their own ground, quoting from the poets with whose writings they were familiar and discussing with them the deep things of philosophy. He could likewise sit down in his prison cell with a poor runaway slave who had in all probability never learned to read a word, and he could make this slave understand the love of God and the plans of salvation which God has revealed in the life and teachings of Jesus. If he had not had the kind of schooling he secured in the tentmaker's shop and had received only the education which the schools could give, he might have interested the Athenians, but he would have found it difficult to interest and instruct the slave.

Learning to be a tentmaker and working at his trade helped Paul to be democratic. It widened his sympathies. Without some such experience his school studies might have resulted in putting him to a certain extent out of touch with the life of the multitudes. Many learned men have not accomplished very much in life because their learning was a barrier separating them from the common people whom they might have helped had they understood them and had they possessed a real sympathy for them.

The Educational Influence of a Cultured Home. There were other educational influences around Paul besides the influence of the schools he attended as a boy. The homes in which we live as children have more to do with shaping our lives than any other agency with which we come in contact. This is because home influences are the first influences which touch our lives and they are practically the only influences for the first and most important years. There are many evidences that the family of which Paul was a member were people of refinement. Paul enjoyed the immense advantage of having a good home. Paul's family were probably people of recognized standing among the Jewish population in Tarsus and possibly at Jerusalem. This may be one reason why Paul became

a member of the sanhedrin at Jerusalem and a recognized leader of the Jewish Church when he was still quite young.

In such a family as Paul's he would be surrounded from his infancy with influences which would affect him all his life. His earliest experiences would impress upon him the religious life of the chosen people. He would see the little boxes which contained extracts from the law and which were fastened to the doorposts of his father's house and worn upon the wrists and foreheads of his parents and other adult members of the household. He would early learn that these sacred emblems must not be rudely touched by his baby fingers, but handled in a careful and reverent way. He would hear his father tell to the assembled household on the eve of the passover feast the stirring tale of Israel's deliverance from the Egyptian bondage, the long wanderings in the wilderness, the heroic conquest of Canaan under the great leader, Joshua, and the adventures and achievements of David.

The Educational Influence of Public Services of Worship and Praise. Jewish boys attended the synagogue services. When they had reached a certain age, they sat with their fathers and the other men of the congregation. Here they would join in singing the stirring psalms which recounted the story of their ancestors or spoke of the sublime future of the nation which the prophets of the Hebrews had led the Jewish people to expect. The reading of the Scriptures, their explanation, and the prayers of the leader and of the congregation must have left indelible impressions on the young soul of Paul as he sat Sabbath after Sabbath in the midst of the men and boys of the congregation. Boys and girls who grow up without attending the services of the Church develop almost inevitably into adults of shallow emotions and limited powers of mind. Anyone who takes the trouble to observe the young people of a community can determine the truth of this statement for himself. If Paul had never attended services where Jehovah was praised and worshiped, he never could have developed into the great-souled man who, more than any other person of

his day, was responsible for the spread of Christianity throughout the Roman Empire.

"Debtor Both to Greeks and to Barbarians." The debt which a pupil owes to a true teacher is a debt that money cannot pay. Sometimes pupils do not realize this at first. They take it as a matter of course when parents and friends and teachers practice self-denial and labor diligently to secure the opportunities of an education for them. They fail to appreciate the unselfish service of those people without whose aid they could never secure an education. Later on, in middle life, perhaps, they come to see what a service has been rendered by their parents and their teachers, and they seek to express their gratitude and to recompense their benefactors as far as they can.

Paul may have had some such experience. In the midst of his missionary labors he wrote a letter to the Christians in Rome. Some of these Roman Christians were evidently Jews, some were Romans, some were Greeks, some were Barbarians. Paul wrote to these people expressing the hope that he might some time visit them. He said that he was a debtor "both to Greeks and to Barbarians." He seems to have meant that he owed a debt to all classes of people—to his own people, the Jews, of course, and also to Greeks and to the half-civilized barbarous tribes with whom he had come in contact. He had learned something from all of them, had been helped in some way by all of them. He owed a vast debt which he could never pay. He was in debt to the kind old Jewish rabbi who had been his teacher in the synagogue school at Tarsus, to the great teachers of his race who had lived and taught in past centuries, to his godly father and mother, to the Greek philosophers who had helped him to know how to think clearly and logically, to barbarous tribes who had shown him kindness in his wanderings and had given heed to his message concerning a Saviour of the world. Appreciation, gratitude, a sense of indebtedness, and a determination to discharge the debt so far as possible by service, seem to have been steps through which Paul came to give himself to his task with such vigor and perseverance.

The Lesson Prayer

Give us a sense of gratitude, our Father in heaven, both to thee and to those among our relatives and friends who have done so much for us. Help us to be diligent in our work at school so that we may be fitted for large usefulness in after life. Guide us in the choice of a life work so that we may find that task which thou hast for us. When we have found the work which thou wouldest have us do, give unto us that patience and perseverance and diligence which we must have if we are to do our work in a manner well-pleasing unto thee. We ask in Jesus' name. Amen.

Supplemental Missionary Story

"Sons of the Desert." "The Book of Missionary Heroes," page 213.

EXPRESSIONAL SESSION

THE PLACE OF EDUCATION IN A GREAT AND USEFUL LIFE

I Tim. 4:13-16; II Tim. 2:15; 3:14-17

Our Scripture lesson is taken from letters which Paul wrote to his young friend and helper, Timothy. Paul seems to have been anxious about two things. In the first place, he was anxious to have Timothy make constant effort for self-improvement. He urged Timothy to "give heed to reading" and warned him against neglecting the gift that was bestowed upon him when he was set apart for the ministry. Paul did not wish Timothy to feel that his education had been completed. He was anxious to have his young friend keep right on improving his mind and developing new power for the great task to which he had addressed himself.

In the second place, Paul was anxious to have his friend keep within the path of true progress. Paul was conscious of a so-called education which leads people away from the truth. So he urged Timothy to "abide . . . in the things" which he had learned.

Some Truths from the Lessons We Have Been Studying

Paul's education helped him to become one of the greatest writers of the New Testament. He wrote nearly one third of the New Testament and he dealt with some of the most important matters in the Christian religion. God could use him for this task because he had made preparation for it.

Paul's education helped him to become one of the greatest theologians of the Christian Church. He had a mind so well trained and so keen that he could see and understand religious truths too deep for most people.

Paul's education enabled him to become one of the greatest leaders of the Christian Church. A leader must have wide knowledge and he must be able not only to understand the truth himself but to help others to understand it. This power Paul had developed by diligent study in school and through learning from all sorts of people and all sorts of experiences.

Review Questions

1. How does Paul's education compare with that of other New Testament leaders?
2. Name some of the ways in which Paul's education helped him to do a great task.
3. What kind of student do you think Paul was?
4. How does Paul's career show the value of Bible study in youth?
5. Is it advisable for a boy or girl to quit school at the age of fourteen in order to go to work?
6. Show that education increases the power of the one who possesses it.
7. What kind of education did Moses receive?
8. How can a person keep on getting an education after leaving school?
9. Name some reasons why young people should go to high school.
10. Name some reasons why young people should go to college.

Bible Verses

Prov. 2:1-5; 3:13-18; 4:1-9; Isa. 33:6; Luke 2:52; Col. 1:9; James 1:5.

Study Topics

1. Tarsus, Paul's Home Town.
2. A Synagogue School.
3. Opportunities for Service Which Are Open to Young People of Good Education.
4. The Educational Influence of a Good Home.
5. The Educational Influence of the Regular Services of the Church.
6. Roman Citizenship in the First Century.
7. What We Owe to Greek Civilization.
8. The Romans and Their Contribution to Human Progress.
9. Our Debt to the Hebrew People.
10. Why It Was a Good Thing for Paul to Learn a Trade.

The Lesson Truth Expressed in a Law

The Law of Self-Improvement. God has given each person possibilities for intellectual and spiritual growth. It is our duty to develop these latent possibilities of mind and heart. Therefore:

1. We will seek diligently to improve our minds in school and after we have ceased to attend school.
2. We will seek to become stronger in self-control, kinder in spirit, and broader in sympathy as long as we live.
3. In our efforts for self-improvement we will strive to be unselfish in our aims, seeking the good of our fellow men and the honor of God rather than prominence and pleasure for ourselves.

Projects for Putting the Lesson Truths Into Practice

Have the class undertake the full or partial support of a child in some foreign-mission school. Ask pupils to

report on the subject, "A Truth I Learned in the Church School and How I Used It to Help Some One Else." Secure information from the Board of Freedmen (506-510 Bessemer Building, Pittsburgh, Pa.), concerning educational conditions among colored people. Have the class study the matter and undertake such help as seems practicable.

CHAPTER II

IN SCHOOL AT JERUSALEM

WEEK DAY SESSION

THE CITY OF THE GREAT KING

Psalms 48, 122; Acts 22:1-3

Paul was probably fourteen or fifteen years old when he left his home at Tarsus and journeyed to Jerusalem to be enrolled as a student in the great school for the training of rabbis. Leaving home is always an event of much importance in the life of a boy. It must have been especially so to Paul for he was going to dwell in a city about which the glory of his race and the religion of his forefathers centered. He was going to a school where he would have as his teachers the greatest living leaders of the Jewish religion and as his textbooks the utterances of the teachers and prophets of past centuries. Paul was at just the age when a visit to Jerusalem and a prolonged residence within its walls would impress him profoundly. He was old enough and knew enough of the history of his nation to appreciate the historic surroundings in the midst of which he had come to dwell for a while. He was young enough for the great and ancient city to impress him deeply and permanently. These years in Jerusalem must have been so profoundly influential over the life of Paul that we may profitably spend this whole chapter in a consideration of the effect which this period had over the life of the lad who lived to become one of the greatest men of all history. In this lesson we will consider the environment which the city of Jerusalem threw about Paul and the effect this environment had in shaping his character. In the next lesson we will study about the school of the rabbis which Paul attended in Jerusalem, and the effect which this teaching had in molding his life.

A City Venerable with Age. Jerusalem is mentioned in some of the Egyptian inscriptions which were written

sixteen hundred years before the birth of Christ. It is likely that Melchizedek, who went out to meet Abraham after the latter had defeated the kings who had plundered the cities of the plain, was the king of Jerusalem. A thousand years before Paul came to attend school in Jerusalem, King David had besieged the city and wrested it from the possession of the Jebusites. The grim old walls of the city showed traces of the furious poundings of Nebuchadnezzar's battering-rams and of the fires with which that fierce Babylonian conqueror had destroyed the place five hundred years before. The walls of the city in Paul's day were constructed in part from fire-scarred remnants of the ancient city.

A City of Profound Historic Interest. There was hardly an event of any great importance since the days of David which was not connected in some way with the city of Jerusalem. Solomon had adorned it as his capital in the days of Israel's greatest temporal glory. From before its walls Sennacherib, the Assyrian, had fled, his army smitten down in a single night by some dreadful malady which the Hebrews believed had been sent by Jehovah. Within its streets the great prophets of the eighth century had preached. It contained the tombs of the long line of kings, some good and some bad, who were descended from King David and who had each for a time sat upon the throne of Judah. The grim Tower of Antonia rising within the Temple area told of the days of the heroic Maccabæan kings who had broken the power of cruel Antiochus Epiphanes, for they had constructed it as a citadel from which to defy the enemies of the resurrected Hebrew nation. The magnificent palace of Herod rising on the outskirts of the city told of more recent history, the rule of the Idumæan king who was hated by the Jews of Pharisaic leaning and flattered by the self-seeking Herodians. The hippodrome and the gymnasium but recently constructed in Paul's day spoke of the situation then present, a situation wherein the customs and ideals of the Hebrews treasured through centuries were grappling in a death struggle with new and demoralizing habits of life introduced by the Romans.

A City of Grandeur and Beauty. Hebrew poets sang continually of the grandeur and beauty of Jerusalem. They said of it,

> "Beautiful in elevation, the joy of the whole earth,
> Is mount Zion, on the sides of the north,
> The city of the great King."

This poetry was not entirely a product of poetic imagination. The situation of Jerusalem was indeed imposing. It lay upon a massive mountain table-land and surrounded on three sides by deep ravines. Beyond these ravines rose mountains still higher than that on which Jerusalem was builded. The mountains were "round about Jerusalem." Seen from the mount of Olives the city must have been a sublime spectacle to the boy Paul as he first came in sight of it. In the foreground covering the whole of Mount Moriah was Herod's magnificent Temple all glittering with white marble and with its pinnacles covered with gold leaf. The soil upon the lower slopes of the hill upon which Jerusalem is built and that in the surrounding valleys is rocky but fertile. It doubtless supported a luxuriant vegetation in the time of Paul. Gardens and olive groves were there. In the springtime brilliantly colored wild flowers peeked out of every rocky crevice and spread sheets of color over valley and hill. The yearly rainfall of Jerusalem is equal to that of London and with the intensive cultivation given to the vineyards and orchards and grainfields in and about Jerusalem in the early part of the first century, we may well believe that it was indeed a place to be admired for its beauty.

A City Beloved and Reverenced. It is hard for us to understand the intense devotion of the Hebrews to Jerusalem. They were proud of their great capital. In the Temple thousands of voices accompanied by stringed instruments and the crash of cymbals sang of the glories of Zion:

> "Walk about Zion, and go round about her;
> Number the towers thereof;
> Mark ye well her bulwarks;
> Consider her palaces:
> That ye may tell it to the generation following."
> —Ps. 48:12, 13.

The Jews almost worshiped Jerusalem. They called it the city of their God and the "holy mountain." They believed that Jehovah had made Jerusalem his peculiar dwelling place on earth and that he would never suffer Jerusalem to be destroyed. It was to the Hebrews an eternal city. Thousands of loyal Hebrews would have gladly given their lives in the days of Paul if they could have freed Jerusalem from the presence of the Roman troops who dwelt within the fortress of Antonia and sternly enforced the Roman peace within the turbulent city.

Well-schooled in the history with which Jerusalem was connected and overflowing with youthful and zealous patriotism, with what feelings of exultation the lad Paul must have drawn near to this sacred city of his forefathers! From the days of his infancy he had heard of this city of the great King. He had sung about it when he was a little boy sitting among the grown men of the congregation in the synagogue:

> "Pray for the peace of Jerusalem:
> They shall prosper that love thee.
> Peace be within thy walls,
> And prosperity within thy palaces."
>
> —Ps. 122:6, 7.

People Whom Paul Met in Jerusalem. Paul's student days in Jerusalem must have brought him into contact with many different types of people. Jerusalem was the dwelling place of many different nationalities and on the great feast days Jews from practically every known land gathered there in large numbers. Among those who came up to Jerusalem for the feasts were many Gentiles who had come to believe in the God of the Jews. These converts to Judaism were called proselytes. Among Paul's fellow students would be many who, like himself, were Jewish lads of the Dispersion and had come from distant places to attend the great school of the rabbis in Jerusalem. In Jerusalem, even more than in Tarsus, Paul would thus come into contact with people from all parts of the world. He doubtless met Roman soldiers every day for they had their chief barracks within the Temple area. Perhaps he sometimes saw them dispers-

ing the multitudes by driving them out of the narrow streets before their spears, for the city was in a restless state under Roman rule and riots were frequent. Paul may have joined with youthful enthusiasm in covert demonstrations against such detested races as the Samaritans, for his education had developed in him that intense but misguided patriotism which sometimes expresses itself in a spirit of persecution.

Three religious sects were prominent in the life of the Jewish nation at that time. They were the Pharisees, the Sadducees, and the Essenes. Paul would come into close contact with the first group for all his teachers were probably Pharisees. The Pharisaic sect had come into existence during the turbulent days of the early Maccabæan kings. At that time the keeping of the Mosaic law was punishable by death under the law of the Greek rulers of Judea. The early Pharisees dared to defy the rulers of their land and were the leaders in the great revolt which finally won independence for the nation. The Pharisees held tenaciously to the great fundamental doctrines of the Hebrew faith which were being endangered by the pagan beliefs of other nations with which the Jews had come into contact. They believed in the immortality of the soul, the resurrection of the body, the existence of spirits, and future rewards or punishments for all mankind in the life which lies beyond.

The Sadducees were bitter antagonists of the Pharisees. They professed to disbelieve in a life after death, denied that there was any resurrection, and doubted the existence of spirits. Paul would become familiar with the Sadducean doctrines, for his teachers would see to it that all their pupils were thoroughly guarded against the heresies of their enemies. He would doubtless become acquainted, at least by sight, with many of the leading Sadducees, for they held the higher offices such as that of the high priesthood. Paul must often have met these Sadducean officials in and about the Temple.

The third religious sect was that of the Essenes. Paul, in all probability, did not see much of them for they dwelt, for the most part, in desert regions and seldom visited the large cities. They had many queer ways and

lived lives somewhat like the monks of the Middle Ages.

The Pharisees had become a powerful sect in Paul's day, but they had fallen from that high type of character which marked them in the days of the Maccabæan kings. They still held to the noble truths for which they had been willing to lay down their lives, but, for the most part, they had ceased to live up to the ideals which their forefathers had maintained. They had become crafty politicians seeking power and place for themselves. Their religion had become external and formal. They strove to keep the utmost letter of the Mosaic law but had forgotten justice and mercy and truth. Many Pharisees were cold and proud. They despised all who had not received as much schooling as themselves. They said of the common people, "This multitude that knoweth not the law are accursed."

There were some exceptions to what has been said about the Pharisees. Here and there were individuals who belonged to the Pharisaic party and who retained much of the noble character of the founders of the sect. Gamaliel, Paul's teacher, was such a Pharisee, a man worthy of respect.

The Religious Life in Humble Hebrew Homes. Although the religious life of the Jewish leaders had grown cold and formal in Paul's day, there was still a true spirit of reverence and worship in many humble Jewish homes. Paul had probably been born and reared in such a home. While Paul was in school at Jerusalem learning what the rabbis had to teach him, there was another boy, just a few years older than Paul, who was living in a humble but righteous home in Nazareth. While Paul was studying in Jerusalem, Jesus was toiling in a carpenter shop in a backwoods town of Galilee. While Paul was memorizing what the ancient rabbis had said about the Mosaic law, Jesus was putting the spirit of that law into his every act as he went about his daily labors in Nazareth. Paul was learning what others had said about the way the law of Moses should be kept; Jesus was thinking his own thoughts as to how that law could be fulfilled in righteous deeds.

Suggestions for Notebook Work

Have pupils draw a map of Jerusalem for their notebooks or for the wall. Locate such places as the Temple, the palace of Herod, the mount of Olives, and the valley of Hinnom. Have pupils write in their notebooks a letter such as Paul might have written to his father, describing the city of Jerusalem, the people he met, and so forth. Picture: The Tower of Antonia in Jerusalem, No. 185.

SUNDAY SESSION

THE SCHOOL WHICH PAUL ATTENDED IN JERUSALEM

Acts 22:1-3; 26:4, 5; 5:33-40

The school which Paul attended in Jerusalem was an institution of higher learning, corresponding to the colleges of our day, though it was in many ways unlike our modern colleges. Since one of its chief aims was to fit young men to become rabbis, or teachers, it corresponded somewhat to our modern normal schools. The time which a pupil spent in the school of the rabbis varied. There was no fixed time during which each pupil was expected to complete the course. Each remained until he had mastered thoroughly the subjects of instruction. Sometimes this took a dozen years. We have reason to believe that Paul was in the school not more than half that length of time and that he went back to Tarsus to take up his task as a teacher there when he was just a little more than twenty years old.

The years spent in college constitute one of the most important periods of a person's life. College training greatly increases the probability of a person's attaining distinction. One person in one hundred thousand attains fame without having attended college, but of college graduates one person in a hundred becomes famous. College life has, therefore, much to do with success and the attainment of distinction among our fellow men. It is of importance, then, that we consider as fully as we are able the school which Paul attended in Jerusalem, and

determine as far as we can the effect its teaching had on his character.

The Building in Which the School Held Its Sessions. The classes of the school in which Paul had enrolled as a pupil met in the Temple. In fair weather the sessions were held in some one of the open courts; when the weather was unfavorable, they were held in some one of the spacious porches or in some room where warmth and shelter could be secured. The teacher sat on a raised seat while the pupils sat on the ground or pavement in front of the teacher.

The influence of this environment over the pupils in the school of the rabbis was probably very great. They were enclosed by sacred walls. They studied within sight of the Holy of Holies where Jehovah was supposed to have his peculiar dwelling place. The odors of burned incense and of the sacrifices offered on the great altar lingered ever about the courts of the Temple. The classes began their sessions early, and even as they gathered, the pupils could hear the voices of the priests offering up the morning sacrifices. The classes continued their sessions for most of the day, and as the pupils turned homeward, the evening oblations would be under way.

The educational value of architecture is very great and we may believe that the massive and spacious structure of the Temple left indelible impressions on the souls of the boys who gathered there day after day to study the religion of which the Temple was an expression in marble shaft and golden pinnacle and far-reaching court. Every pillar and every fresco of decoration of that vast building was symbolical of some event or some doctrine sacred to the heart of the Hebrew. The Holy Place spoke of the ever-present Jehovah. The court of Israel told of the special relationships existing between the chosen people and the God of all the earth. The vast court of the Gentiles, nine hundred feet square, was emblematic of the wide approach to the true God which was to be made for all people through the religion of Israel. Five or six years of intimate association with the Temple must have influenced Paul profoundly. He must have left that school believing with all his heart in the existence of

Jehovah and feeling that the Hebrew religion was yet to become the mightiest power in all the world.

Paul's Studies in the School of the Rabbis. Paul had memorized most of the Mosaic law in the synagogue school at Tarsus. His task now was to memorize the vast amount of traditional interpretations of the law. Day after day he sat on the ground before his teachers and repeated after them the opinions which had been expressed by the ancient rabbis. He thus committed to memory hundreds and hundreds of pages of closely written matter. All of his school work was not of this tedious type, however. Sometimes pupils and teachers discussed religious topics together. Sometimes famous rabbis from abroad were present and they engaged in public discussions with the leaders of the Jerusalem school in the presence of the pupils.

Many subjects which make up a large part of the curriculum of a modern school were entirely lacking in the school which Paul attended. There was no study of science, of philosophy, or of history in general. Paul may have read Greek literature while he was a pupil in Jerusalem, but it is quite certain that he did not study any Greek textbook in the school.

The Teachers of the School. Teachers were held in high honor among the Hebrews. When the teacher entered, all the pupils arose and remained standing until the teacher had taken his seat. All the honors due a parent were believed to belong to the teacher and he was looked upon with a spirit akin to reverence because he was regarded as God's representative.

Paul had as one of his teachers a man who had become famous as a teacher and theologian. His name was Gamaliel. He was not only head of the school of the rabbis in Jerusalem, but a kind of superintendent for the educational system of the entire Hebrew nation. He secured the passage of a law making it compulsory for all Jewish children of six years and older to attend school. Gamaliel was likewise a leading member of the highest Jewish court called the sanhedrin. He was a man of more liberal views than most of the Pharisees and was well acquainted with Greek learning. Under his

teaching Paul must have come in contact with the best thought of his day, even though Greek textbooks were not used in the classes.

The character of Gamaliel is shown by the passage from The Acts which forms a part of our Scripture lesson. The incident here recorded shows us that Gamaliel was a man of lofty courage. The members of the sanhedrin were almost unanimous in their determination to slay the apostles whom they had in their power. It took no small amount of courage for Gamaliel to stand out alone in the midst of a court filled with murderous hate and frenzied fear. He calmly stated the case and his unimpassioned words were wonderfully effective over the enraged court. Gamaliel must, indeed, have been "had in honor of all people" or he could not have accomplished what he did that day in the meeting of the sanhedrin.

In this incident Gamaliel is seen to have been a man of wisdom. He recognized the possibility of the apostles' being right and warned his fellow members that if this was the case, and the work wrought by the Christians therefore a work of God, no human intervention could ever overthrow it. He went on to say that if the Christian movement were not from God it would inevitably come to nought without the drastic measures which his companions were urging.

There is an ancient tradition that Gamaliel became a Christian before he died. It may be that this tradition is true, for he certainly manifested on that day in the sanhedrin a spirit of open-mindedness toward Christianity which might well have led him into a full knowledge of the truth as it is revealed in Jesus Christ.

Paul's Schoolmates in the School of Rabbis. One of the most helpful advantages of college life lies in the fact that it puts one in touch with people with whom lifelong and helpful friendships are maintained. Some Bible students have marveled at the extent of Paul's personal acquaintanceship. They have been puzzled to explain how it was that in writing a letter to the Christians in Rome Paul was acquainted with so many people in a city which he never had visited. Paul sent salutations to more than thirty people in Rome and he mentioned

nearly all of them by name showing, moreover, by some little phrase of personal significance that he was intimately acquainted with most of them.

It may be that this wide acquaintance of Paul is explained in part by the period of his life which we are now studying. In school at Jerusalem he would come into close fellowship with many students who like himself were preparing for the work of teaching. The Hebrew historian, Josephus, has told us that some of the famous rabbis of the Jerusalem school had a multitude of pupils always about them. So as Paul sat at the feet of Gamaliel he would be one of several hundred who were listening to the words of that great teacher. He would there become acquainted with many fellow students who had come from distant lands, possibly dozens of them from such prominent cities as Rome and Alexandria. These fellow students of Paul's would in many cases become the leading people of their home communities. It may be that some of them like Paul later became followers of Jesus. It is not impossible that some of these school companions of Paul were among the number to whom the apostle sent greetings when he wrote to the Roman Christians.

The Results of Paul's School Days in Jerusalem. Paul went forth from the school of the rabbis with a consuming devotion to the religion of his forefathers. To teach that religion to the rising generation had become the passion of his life. He had been taught that the way to a righteous life and to spiritual satisfaction lay in knowing the Mosaic law and the enormous volume of interpretations which had been given by the rabbis of old. He had been taught that in observing this law and these interpretations of it he would attain to a character like the characters of the great men of his race whom he honored and adored.

What Paul had learned was therefore not without marked benefits to him. The school of the rabbis had made an idealist of him. He could now hardly fall into the shameful state of some of his fellow countrymen who had become tax collectors under the Romans. He was too patriotic ever to become one of these publicans. He

was too deeply schooled in the great fundamental truths of the Hebrew faith ever to become a disbelieving Sadducee. He was sure of the existence of God, sure of the life which lies in a realm beyond the present existence, sure that the Almighty had a glorious work for his nation in the years and centuries which lay ahead. An education which gives these assurances to a young man cannot be considered a failure.

Yet Paul's education had been far from perfect. It had made him narrow in his sympathies. He endeavored to keep every little precept which any ancient rabbi had taught concerning the observance of the Sabbath, but he passed by the soul-hungry multitudes and the blind beggars and the loathsome lepers and felt no stirring of compassion for them. These people were a part of the crowd of useless trash rejected of Jehovah because they knew not the law; so he had been taught and so he felt and believed.

Paul's education had made him fiercely intolerant toward any religious opinions which were not in harmony with what the old-time rabbis had taught. He thought of truth as having been revealed, once for all in the law of Moses and interpreted, once for all, in the teachings of the rabbis who had lived centuries ago. There was no place in his system of religion for change or progress.

He had thus been grounded in certain great truths to which he was to be loyal all his life. At the same time he had been schooled in certain ideas and attitudes admirably fitted to make him a bitter persecutor of any who might not agree entirely with the interpretations of the rabbis. The former education, namely, his faith in God and immortality and his assurance concerning the divine plans for the future, was to be the foundation on which he was to rear a character mighty in its strength and amazing in its accomplishments. The latter, namely, his blind devotion to interpretations that were of the long ago and humanly imperfect, was to be to him a handicap of which he should be rid only through much stress of soul and through a new vision of the truth as it is in Jesus.

The Lesson Prayer

Our Father in heaven, we thank thee for the opportunities which thou hast opened so widely before us. We thank thee especially for the chance to improve our minds by securing an education. Grant that we may not neglect these gifts of thine. Help us to be diligent in our school work and faithful to our school duties. Help us to be obedient and respectful to those who teach us. We ask in Jesus' name. Amen.

Supplemental Missionary Story

"The Roadmaker." "The Book of Missionary Heroes," page 164.

EXPRESSIONAL SESSION

THE DANGERS OF AN EDUCATION

Gal. 1:11-24

As we continue our study of the life of Paul, we shall see that it took something more than schooling to make of him the great-souled man which he became. Indeed, we shall see that the education which he had received in Jerusalem, while it did many helpful things for him, was withal so imperfect that it came near wrecking his life. This interesting letter which Paul wrote to his Galatian friends sums up in a remarkable way the forces which had been at work in the life of Paul. His education had made him "exceedingly zealous for the traditions" of his fathers. He had been such a studious pupil that he had surpassed almost everyone else in his mastery of the Mosaic law and its interpretations. With this zeal for God, which was nevertheless not according to knowledge, he had become the foremost persecutor of his day until he was suddenly halted and turned face about by what Paul called a revealing of God's Son to him.

Some Truths from the Lessons We Have Been Studying

Education is a drawing forth of the powers latent within the individual. It may develop latent powers for good or latent powers for evil.

Education of the right kind will not cause its possessor to depise those who are not educated.

True education makes its possessor humble for it reveals the vast extent of the unknown. Sir Isaac Newton was beginning to be truly educated when he said that he had gathered only a few pebbles on the beach while the vast ocean of truth lay all undiscovered before him.

Education of the right kind leads its possessor to respect the opinions of others and to seek help and guidance from God.

An education which leaves out the culture of the religious faculties is imperfect and dangerous.

True education teaches the hand to do, the mind to think, and the heart to feel. Paul's education had been somewhat imperfect, especially in regard to the last and most important item.

Review Questions

1. What should a complete education include?
2. In what way was Paul's education defective?
3. What kind of men were the Pharisees?
4. How does a true education change our attitudes toward our fellow men?
5. How does a true education change our attitudes toward God?
6. Tell what you can of the city of Jerusalem in the days of Paul.
7. Who were the Sadducees?
8. Tell why you think that it was a good thing for Paul to have his classes meet in the Temple.
9. Tell what you can of the character of Paul's teacher, Gamaliel.
10. How did Paul come to have a wide circle of acquaintances?

Bible Verses

Ps. 16:11; 25:9; 27:11; 32:8; 73:24; 119:105; Prov. 4:18; Isa. 58:11; Jer. 3:4; Luke 1:79; John 16:13.

Study Topics

1. What We Know of the Education of Jesus. Luke 2:40, 52.

2. The Dangers of an Imperfect Education.
3. Why Paul Almost Failed at the Beginning of His Career.
4. Can a Boy or a Girl Secure a Good Education Without Attending Sunday School and Church?
5. The Advantages of the Educated Person in Business.
6. What I Admire Most in Gamaliel, the Teacher of Paul.
7. The Place of Religious Education in the Establishment of a Moral Life. (For the pastor, city-school superintendent, or some other adult person.)
8. The Importance of Religious Education in the Life of a Nation.
9. Ways in Which We Can Help to Improve the Educational Work of Our Church.
10. Why the Teaching Task Is One of Opportunities and Responsibilities.

The Lesson Truth Expressed in a Law

The Law of Humanity and Service. The people who have been most truly and most fully educated have lived humble and helpful lives. Therefore:

1. We will strive in every way for self-improvement, but we will not be proud of our attainments and disdainful toward others.
2. We will remember that what we have learned we owe to others and that it is, at best, but small when compared with the great stores of undiscovered truth.
3. We will remember that we need the wisdom which comes from God to direct our lives, and we will humbly seek his guidance.

Projects for Putting the Lesson Truths Into Practice

Have the class study the educational system of their church under the guidance of the teacher. Investigate such items as the following: Is the Sunday school reaching its constituency? Is the average attendance of the church school up to the average attendance of the public

schools of the same community? Are pupils and teachers punctual? Is the order in the church school as good as it is in a well-regulated public school? Are the lesson materials of the church school as interesting and attractive in form as the lesson materials of the public schools? Help pupils to undertake projects for improving the church school in whatever respect seems advisable.

CHAPTER III

BEGINNING HIS CAREER

WEEK DAY SESSION

TEACHING AND TENT-MAKING IN TARSUS WHILE MOMENTOUS EVENTS WERE OCCURRING IN JUDEA

John 21:25; Mark 7:1-23; Acts 2:1-13; 6:8-15; ch. 7

The New Testament does not say that Paul returned to his home in Tarsus after completing his schooling in Jerusalem, but it is quite certain that he did so. Paul must have been absent from Judea during the ministry of Jesus, else he would have certainly seen Jesus at some time. Paul does not mention having met Jesus at any time except at that moment on the Damascus road when he heard the voice which turned him away from a career of persecuting to a career of preaching. Young men who were expecting to become rabbis often completed the learning of a trade after they had finished their schooling and it may be that Paul went back to Tarsus to take up again the task of learning to make tents and the cloth out of which the tents of that time were constructed.

Years of Obscurity. We lose sight of Paul for some six or seven years after he left the Jerusalem school. He is thought to have been living in Tarsus during this period. He was doubtless teaching in some synagogue school during the time and earning his living in out-of-school hours by laboring at his trade. From what we know of Paul's disposition we may be sure that he was throwing himself into his work with energy and enthusiasm. His studies in Jerusalem had made him still more devoted to the law of Moses than he had been when he left Tarsus for the great center of the Jewish religion. Now he was entering upon what he believed to be his life work. He was teaching young boys to know and

obey the law and its interpretations. Paul was as yet unknown to any great extent among his countrymen. He was just like thousands of other rabbis who were teaching boys in the synagogues of the Jews scattered over the known world. He was passing through a period of obscurity. Many men who have become famous have had similar experiences. They have labored on for years in some obscure corner of the world at a humdrum task. They have done their work well because they loved it. They have been big men in small places and have thus become fit to be big men in big places.

Exciting News out of Judea. Momentous events were occurring in and about Jerusalem and in other sections of Judea and Galilee during the years Paul spent as a teacher and tentmaker in Tarsus. Paul must have heard about these events. He was far too much concerned about the future of his nation not to have kept himself informed about events of major importance in Palestine. He had left Jerusalem but it is likely that he kept up correspondence with some of his acquaintances there. We may believe that Paul heard about the preaching of a strange prophet who had arisen in the Wilderness of Judea and who called upon the nation to repent in preparation for the coming of the Messiah. The message of John the Baptist must have stirred Paul deeply, for like other Pharisees he was expecting the Messiah to appear as the deliverer of Israel from the rule of the Romans.

Paul must have heard later about the prophet from Nazareth who was drawing such multitudes after him and proclaiming that the day for the establishment of God's Kingdom was come. Paul would be apt to correspond with people who were Pharisees. The information which he received about both John the Baptist and about Jesus would therefore be strongly tinged by the prejudices of the Pharisees. Paul doubtless watched from afar the march of events in Palestine and felt a sense of relief when he learned that the Nazarene teacher had been crucified and his followers scattered. He probably thought that the matter had thus been brought to an end and the beloved law saved from a dangerous heresy which had threatened for a time to destroy it.

The Far-Flung Echoings of Pentecost. Paul must have heard of Pentecost soon after the events of that remarkable day. People from all over the world were present on the day when the followers of Jesus received a new inspiration through the descent of the Holy Spirit upon them. These Jews of the Dispersion carried the news of Pentecost to the uttermost regions of the known earth. The dangers which Paul had believed to be over would now be seen to be greater than before. The followers of the Nazareth teacher were boldly proclaiming that their leader had risen from the dead and that he was the Messiah for whom the Jewish nation had so long been waiting. Moreover, this preaching was producing astonishing results. Three thousand people had accepted Jesus as the Messiah on one day and the number of people who professed themselves followers of Jesus was increasing daily. Many of the high officials like the priests were numbered among those who had accepted the new faith.

Paul's Return to Jerusalem. At this crisis Paul appeared once more in Jerusalem. We do not know that reports concerning events in Judea had anything to do with his return, but it seems likely that such was the case. It may be that the Pharisees in Jerusalem summoned him to come and assume leadership in the movements they were planning to put in operation for the checking of the new religion. We know that Paul assumed this position of leadership soon after his return to Jerusalem and it seems likely that he came back to the city with this task in view. He was just the kind of man the Pharisees would choose for such a task. He was young, vigorous, intensely devoted to the religious customs of his forefathers, fiercely opposed to anything which seemed to endanger the traditional interpretations of the law. All these facts make it easy to believe that he was called from afar to take charge of the forces which were lined up against the youthful Church which had sprung up out of the seed sown by the Teacher from Nazareth.

Impassioned Debates. The Pharisees seem to have believed at first that they could silence the leaders of the Christians by arguments. The Pharisees were expert in this respect. They had been trained in it with great

care. The leaders of the Christians gladly accepted the challenge. Among the Christians was a young man named Stephen. He developed great powers as a debater with those who opposed the religion of Jesus. An impassioned argument followed the meeting of these opposing forces. The subject of discussion centered about the Mosaic law and Jesus as the one who was to fulfill that law as the Messiah sent from God. The Jews of the Dispersion took a leading part in this argument against Christianity. Stephen himself was probably one of these Jews from the countries lying outside of Palestine. We are not told that Paul took part in these debates, but there is every reason to believe that he did so. Some of those who opposed Stephen are said to have been from Cilicia, Paul's own province, and it is likely that Paul was one of them.

Plotting Stephen's Destruction. Acts. 6:8-15. The opponents of Stephen were not able to stand against him. We are told that "they were not able to withstand the wisdom and the spirit by which he spake." Filled with rage at their defeat before the multitudes, and burning with fanatical fear for the safety of the traditions which they adored as the very truth of God, these enemies of Stephen plotted to destroy their opponent. They could not answer his arguments with facts and evidences, therefore they would answer after another fashion. They hired false witnesses who swore that they had heard Stephen speak blasphemous words against Moses and against God. So he was arrested and brought before the sanhedrin for trial. Here the false witnesses again appeared and said, "This man ceaseth not to speak words against this holy place, and the law: for we have heard him say, that this Jesus of Nazareth shall destroy this place, and shall change the customs which Moses delivered unto us." The charge is thus seen to have been that of profaning the Temple by saying that it would one day be destroyed, and that of endangering the traditional interpretations of the Mosaic law by saying that these interpretations would some day be changed through the power of the religion which Jesus had inaugurated. Neither of these assertions were really blasphemous. They were

probably perversions of something which Stephen had said in his arguments with his opponents, and they had now been seized upon as pretexts for raising the fury of the multitudes against him.

Facing the Highest Tribunal of the Jewish People. Acts, ch. 7. As Stephen faced his accusers before the sanhedrin, his countenance took on the glow which sometimes accompanies lofty spiritual experiences. We are told that "all that sat in the council, fastening their eyes on him, saw his face as it had been the face of an angel." The high priest said to Stephen, "Are these things so?" Then Stephen made his defense. His address is a masterpiece of argumentative eloquence. As we read it we understand why his antagonists had not been "able to withstand the wisdom and the Spirit by which he spake."

He reviewed the history of the chosen people, showing how the same blind conservatism which now was so clearly manifested by his opponents had all down the centuries opposed the carrying out of the plans of God. He showed how Moses had predicted the coming of the Messiah. He declared how the forefathers turned against Moses and longed for a return to Egypt and demanded that Aaron make them gods which might go before them in their wanderings.

The address of Stephen was never completed. He reached a point where he burst forth in a scathing denunciation of his opponents: "Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Spirit: as your fathers did, so do ye. Which of the prophets did not your fathers persecute? and they killed them that showed before of the coming of the Righteous One; of whom ye have now become betrayers and murderers; ye who received the law as it was ordained by angels, and kept it not." This bold accusation was answered with a wild outburst of enraged denunciation from the opponents of Stephen. They gnashed their teeth in rage and the assembly was in an uproar. Knowing that his last hour had come, Stephen looked up toward heaven and cried out, "Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God." The enemies of Stephen stopped their ears

lest they should hear more of these words of Stephen which they regarded as blasphemous. They rushed upon him, dragging him from the Temple, through the streets of the city, through the gates, out to the open spaces beyond the walls, and there they stoned him to death.

Paul in the New Testament Narratives. At this tragic point in the historical sketch which we have come to call The Acts, Paul is mentioned for the first time. He was present at the stoning of Stephen. Those who cast off their outer garments in order to take part in the stoning of the first Christian martyr laid down their clothing at the feet of Paul, thus indicating not only that Paul was present but that he was there as a recognized overseer of the affair. His career as a persecutor of the Christians was begun.

Suggestions for Notebook Work

Draw in the notebooks an outline map of Herod's Temple, locating the various courts and porches. A map showing the floor plan of the Temple is to be found in most Bible dictionaries. Have pupils write a short essay on "Stephen, the First Christian Martyr." Picture: Tomb of David in Jerusalem, No. 184.

SUNDAY SESSION

PERSECUTING THE CHURCH OF CHRIST

Acts 8:1-3; 9:1, 2; 26:9-11

We have in these lessons several times referred to Paul as one of the greatest men of all the centuries. He was great because of the good he accomplished in his life, but he came near being great in the opposite direction, that is, great in the amount of evil he brought to pass. His life moved strongly in that direction for a time. Possessing powers of mind and elements of personality which amounted to those of a genius, he was all the more dangerous because of these gifts, so long as he was pursuing a course which ran counter to the plans of God. In this lesson we are to consider the compara-

tively brief period, perhaps a year or a little less, during which Paul was leading the first serious and far-reaching persecution of the followers of Jesus.

The Timidity of the Jewish Leaders in Jerusalem. As we read the early chapters of The Acts, we are impressed by the fact that the Jewish leaders pursued a somewhat timid course in their dealings with the apostles. They manifested none of that grim and vigorous determination which had marked their attitude toward Jesus only a few months before. Yet the same leaders were still in control. Annas and Caiaphas had been the chief plotters against Jesus and they were now the leaders in the movement to destroy the religion which Jesus had inaugurated. Why did they not stamp out all vestiges of the Christian religion forthwith? It is a significant fact that the opposition to the Christians developed strongly among the Jews of the Dispersion and that Paul who had been absent from Palestine during the ministry of Jesus ultimately became the leader of the movement looking toward the extinction of the new religion. We can best explain these facts by supposing that the events connected with the death of Jesus and the evidences concerning his resurrection had awed leaders like Annas and Caiaphas. They still pursued their attitude of opposition to the Christian faith but an inward fear which haunted them day and night had broken their spirits. Paul and the other Jews of the Dispersion, not having seen the darkness which fell over the earth when Jesus was on the cross, knowing nothing about the panic-stricken soldiers who had told of the descent of the angel on the morning of the resurrection, believing what they had been told about the disciples' stealing away the body of Jesus, were still fully persuaded that the teacher from Nazareth was an impostor. But leaders like Annas and Caiaphas knew about the events which we have mentioned. They had seen the darkness fall upon the world as Jesus hung on the cross and it had silenced all their boasting. They had talked with the terrified soldiers who had fled from the presence of the angel. They knew that the disciples of Jesus had not stolen away the body of their Master. These leaders had themselves fabricated

that story and they knew that it was not true. They were not repentant but they were awed into an inactivity which is in striking contrast to their former attitude of confidence, bravado, and vigor.

Fitted to Be the Scourge of the Christians. Paul's education had fitted him for the task to which he now addressed himself. He had been taught to believe that religion consisted in a strict observance of the Mosaic law as interpreted by the ancient rabbis. He was very particular about the kind of meat he ate, he washed his hands in a certain way and at stated times, he would not do on the Sabbath Day any act which the rabbis of old had declared illegal, he kept the fast days rigorously. Paul did all these things conscientiously, but he did not have a wide sympathy. He was narrow and cold and hard because his education had been defective. He became all the more terrible as a persecutor because he was conscientious in it. He believed that the religion of his fathers contained all the truth which God had given to men and that this religion was now in peril because of the new religion which had sprung out of the teachings of Jesus. He believed that he was justified in going to any length in saving the Jewish religion from destruction. When the timidity of the Jerusalem leaders had thrown this task of combating Christianity upon the shoulders of Paul he accepted it willingly and without delay set out to accomplish it thoroughly and speedily.

Methods of the Persecutor. Acts 26:9-11. Paul was a man of tremendous energy and he now put his whole soul into the effort to destroy the religion of Jesus. His aim was to wipe the whole sect of the Christians out of existence. At a later time Paul wrote of his attitude toward the Christians when he was leader of the persecutions and he says that he was "exceedingly mad against them." Paul's plan was to lay hold of every professed follower of Jesus and to cause every one of them either to renounce Christ or to suffer death. He himself said that he "strove to make them blaspheme." He probably demanded that every professed follower of Jesus deny the Messiahship of Jesus and his relation to the Father as the only begotten Son. Evidently he was willing to

spare the life of any Christian who would thus blaspheme the name of Jesus to escape death. It is worth noting that Paul says that he "strove to make them blaspheme." He does not say that he succeeded in any case. Evidently the Christians of that day almost or quite without exception stood by their faith, even at the cost of their lives. When the Christians refused to deny their Lord, Paul gave his vote against them in the sanhedrin and they went to their death.

Laying Waste the Church in Jerusalem. Acts 8:1-3. The first blow against the Christians fell upon the Jerusalem church. Every Christian home was invaded and its inmates dragged away to prison, unless they had already sought safety in flight. The Roman governor seems to have given the sanhedrin full authority to try and punish those accused of being followers of Jesus.

The church in Jerusalem was nearly swept out of existence. Many of the Christians fled to other cities of Palestine or out into the other provinces of the Roman Empire. Some remained in Jerusalem but they were in hiding. These doubtless kept up the services of the church in caves and cellars and other secret places where Paul and his lieutenants were not able to find them. The Christian religion had been driven underground and out into the night, but it had not been destroyed and it began to grow again even in Jerusalem in spite of all that Paul and the other persecutors could do.

A Blessing in Disguise. Acts 8:4-8. The persecutions proved to be a blessing to Christianity. Jesus had commanded his followers to tarry in Jerusalem until they should receive power from on high. After receiving the power of the Holy Spirit they were to "go . . . into all the world, and preach the gospel to the whole creation." The Christians did not at once take up the sublime task to which their Leader had appointed them. They seem to have settled down in Jerusalem, content to live a happy life of Christian brotherhood among themselves. The persecutions scattered Christianity over a large section of the Roman Empire. Fleeing from the persecutions in Jerusalem, the Christians entered Samaria and Antioch and Cyprus. Everywhere they went they preached the

Christian faith. As a result of the persecutions under the leadership of Paul, the foreign mission enterprise which Jesus had commanded his disciples to undertake was now begun.

Following the Fugitives to Strange Cities. Paul's attempt to destroy Christianity in Jerusalem had been like a whirlwind striking a burning brush pile and scattering blazing fragments far and wide through a forest. He must have seen that his efforts had made matters worse. He began to hear of Christian churches springing up in Samaria and Damascus and Antioch. Paul was not a person to give up, however. He had at least suppressed the Christian movement in Jerusalem. He had driven it underground. He would pursue his task to completion, moreover; he would follow the Christians into all the cities and countries whence they had fled and he would destroy them there as he had done in Jerusalem. The peculiar status of the Jews in most of the Roman Empire made it possible for Paul to follow them and persecute them almost everywhere. The Jews of most cities and countries of the Roman Empire were regarded as still a part of the Jewish nation in Palestine and subject to the government there. This made it possible for Paul to secure authority from the sanhedrin and to go into almost any city, seize those accused of being Christians, and bring them back to Jerusalem for trial. The task of suppressing Christianity had now assumed proportions far beyond what Paul had expected, but he was not to be deterred by increasing difficulties and enlarged tasks. He set about his larger and more difficult task of eradicating Christianity from half of the Roman Empire with the same relentless energy that had characterized his first move against the Jerusalem church.

The Lesson Prayer

Our Father in heaven, teach us to appreciate the Church of thy Son. When we think how the founders of the Church endured persecutions and gave up their lives that the religion of Jesus might not perish from the earth, we realize how precious is the Church of our own day. Enable us not only to appreciate the Church but

also to show our appreciation by laboring faithfully to make the Church strong. Grant that each of us may give of our money for the support of the Church and for the support of all the undertakings in which the Church is engaged. Help us to give a just portion of our time to the doing of the tasks which the Church would have us do.

Guide us in the study of these lessons. Teach us to avoid those habits and attitudes which give us the spirit of selfishness and intolerance. Teach us to be kind and just and sympathetic. We ask in the name of Jesus, thy Son. Amen.

SUPPLEMENTAL MISSIONARY STORY

"Fighting the Slave Trade." "The Book of Missionary Heroes," page 172.

EXPRESSIONAL SESSION

THE PLACE OF TOLERANCE IN A GREAT AND USEFUL LIFE

Mark 9:38-40; Luke 9:51-56

We have seen how Paul's education had made him intolerant. It is right that a person should believe with his whole soul that which he has accepted as the truth. A person can do this and still be tolerant toward others. Intolerance is that attitude of an individual or of an organization which denies to other individuals or other organizations the right to judge for themselves, especially in religious matters, though the spirit of intolerance is manifested in other matters than those which are distinctly religious. The two passages of Scripture chosen as the basis of this session of the church school give us good illustrations of intolerance and toleration. The disciple John saw a certain man casting out demons in the name of Jesus. This man was not a regular disciple. He had probably not been given authority to do what he was doing. John told the man that he must not use the name of Jesus any more because he was not one of the regular disciples. John had exactly the spirit of intolerance which has unfortunately been manifested from

time to time among the different denominations into which the followers of Jesus have been divided. People of some one denomination have sometimes come to feel that they are the true followers of Jesus and that the people of other denominations are irregular followers who really have no right to be called Christians. This is the spirit of intolerance and bigotry which has been a great hindrance to the cause of Christ in the world.

In this same incident Jesus has given us an illustration of true toleration. He said to his disciple: "Forbid him not: for there is no man who shall do a mighty work in my name, and be able quickly to speak evil of me. For he that is not against us is for us." With Jesus the matter of greatest importance was not whether the man was a regular follower or not, but whether he was doing a useful and helpful deed in the name of Jesus. If this spirit of toleration had always characterized the followers of Jesus to the extent it characterized their Leader, the Church might have escaped many harmful controversies and disastrous divisions.

The second passage of Scripture shows us how intolerant the disciples were toward the people of a certain Samaritan village who had refused hospitality to Jesus and his followers. James and John wished to call down fire from heaven to destroy these Samaritan villagers. Jesus was tolerant toward those who had offered the offense. He rebuked his disciples and then the company went on to the next village. Toleration toward those who differ with them, who oppose them, and even offer them personal indignities, has been a characteristic of many of the truly great men and women of history. Because of his disposition and also because of his education it was hard for Paul to learn the lesson of toleration. That he did ultimately learn it will become manifest as we pursue the story of his life.

Some Truths from the Lessons We Have Been Studying

Gamaliel was tolerant toward the Christians but in some way Paul had failed to become like his great teacher in this respect.

Intolerance often injures the person who manifests it more than it injures the person toward whom it is manifested. So long as Paul was intolerant toward the Christians he was shutting the light out of his own soul.

Like all other virtues toleration must have the right motive back of it. Annas and Caiaphas were more tolerant toward the followers of Jesus than they had been toward Jesus himself; but their toleration was the result of fear and weakness rather than the result of kindness and a sense of justice.

Review Questions

1. What evidences have we that Paul went back to Tarsus after completing his schooling in Jerusalem?
2. Outline the events which occurred in Judea and Galilee while Paul was teaching and making tents in Tarsus.
3. Why do you think Paul returned to Jerusalem?
4. What was the topic of discussion in the debates between Stephen and those who opposed him?
5. Tell of the martyrdom of Stephen.
6. Why were the leaders of the Jews in Jerusalem more tolerant toward the Christians than the Jews of the Dispersion were?
7. In what ways had Paul's education fitted him to become a persecutor?
8. Tell of the methods Paul used in his efforts to destroy Christianity.
9. How did it happen that Paul could pursue the Christians into other lands and bring them back to Jerusalem for trial?
10. What is meant by the term "tolerance"?

Bible Verses

John 16:12-14; Rom. 1:14; I Cor. 13:1, 2, 4-7, 9, 12; Gal. 6:2-5, Eph. 4:32.

Study Topics

1. Gamaliel's Tolerant Attitude Toward the Apostles. Acts 5:33-40.

2. What Jesus Taught Concerning Tolerance Toward Persons Who Are Selfish and Rude. Matt. 5:38-42.

3. Is It Possible to Be Tolerant Toward Those Who Are Doing Wrong and at the Same Time Not Excuse Them for Wrongdoing or Encourage Them in Their Evil Ways? (Study the attitude of Jesus toward the publicans.)

4. Ought We to Be Tolerant Toward People Whom We Know to Be Holding Religious Opinions Which Are Untrue? (Study the attitude of Jesus toward the Samaritans.)

5. Some Evils Toward Which We Ought Not to Manifest a Spirit of Toleration. (For example the liquor business, impure conversation on the part of our companions, ridicule of sacred things, and the like.)

6. Paul's Tolerant Attitude Toward People Who Had Peculiar Notions About the Eating of Certain Kinds of Meat. Rom. 14:13-21.

7. John's Intolerant Attitude Toward Doctrines Which Dishonor Jesus Christ. I John 5:10.

8. A Church Reproved for Being Tolerant Toward False Teachings. Rev. 2:12-17.

9. Tolerance Toward Oneself. (Do you tolerate poor work done by yourself, acts of discourtesy, and the like? Or do you call yourself to account for such failures and demand of yourself better conduct for the future?)

10. Occasions When a Christian Ought to Be Tolerant. (For the pastor or other adult person.)

The Lesson Truth Expressed in a Law

The Law of Tolerance. The domain of truth is so great and we are all so likely to be mistaken in our conceptions of truth that a tolerant attitude toward those whose opinions differ from our own is usually a wise policy. Therefore:

1. We will be tolerant toward those whose customs and ideas differ from our own.

2. We will be tolerant toward those whose religion differs from our own, whenever we can do so without sanctioning that which is positively evil or without compromising our own religious convictions.

3. We will strive to be tolerant toward any who are discourteous or rude to us and we will try under such circumstances to follow the teachings of Jesus and his example.

Projects for Putting the Lesson Truths Into Practice

Have the class make a study of the local Christian Endeavor Union if there is one in the community. If there is none, consider the advisability of organizing some such interdenominational body for the young people of the community. Have the class visit church services in denominations and religious bodies different from the denomination to which the church school belongs. Discuss the services visited with a view to developing in the pupils a sympathetic attitude toward the forms of religious worship which differ from those of their own Church.

CHAPTER IV

A VISION OF JESUS AND A CHANGED LIFE

WEEK DAY SESSION

A SUDDEN END OF A PERSECUTING CAREER

Acts 9:1-9; 22:3-21; 26:12-18

The conversion of Paul was one of the most important events in the early Church. It was important because it won to the Christian cause one who became a tremendous power for spreading the religion of Jesus over the known world. It was likewise important because it demonstrated the power of the risen Saviour to overcome his opponents and to make of them his most devoted allies. In the conversion of Paul, Jesus was shown to be more than a conqueror. Realizing the importance of the conversion of Paul, the writers of the New Testament were careful to gather and record much information concerning it. We have a greater number of accounts of the conversion of Paul and more detailed information concerning that event than is recorded concerning the conversion of any other character in the Scriptures. There are three of these accounts in The Acts; there is one account in the Epistle to the Galatians; and there are two references to the event in the First Epistle to the Corinthians. In studying about the conversion of Paul we are therefore dealing not only with an event of momentous importance in the life of the great apostle but likewise with an incident which profoundly influenced the growth of the Christian Church. We are also dealing with a subject on which the New Testament has given us more extensive information than is the case with that part of Paul's life which we have taken up heretofore.

Ruthless, Remorseless, and Relentless. Admiral Fisher said that the "The Three R's of War" are Ruthless, Remorseless, and Relentless. He meant that the successful soldier must not be deterred from pushing his task vigorously by any feeling of ruth or pity for his antagonist,

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PAUL LET DOWN IN A BASKET

that he must not allow his attacks to lose vigor through any remorse or regrets over the injury he had wrought upon his enemy, and that he must keep right on punishing his enemy relentlessly until a full victory is assured. Paul evidently fulfilled these requirements for a successful warrior. In his dealing with the Christians he was ruthless, remorseless, and relentless. He was a terrible fighter. The New Testament says that he went about "breathing threatening and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord."

Setting Out for Damascus. Acts 9:1, 2. Having learned that there were followers of Jesus among the Jews dwelling in Damascus, Paul determined to visit that city and deal with the Christians there as he had dealt with the Christians in Jerusalem. Perhaps the Christians of Damascus were for the most part people who had become members of the Christian Church in Jerusalem and had fled from that city when Paul was ravaging the Jerusalem church. Paul went to the high priest and secured from him letters to the Jewish synagogues in Damascus. These letters informed the leaders of the Damascus synagogues that Paul was commissioned by the high priest, who was also the chief officer of the Jewish supreme court called the sanhedrin, to seize any Christians whom he might find in Damascus. These letters stated that the Christians were to be seized wherever they could be found and no matter whether the persons arrested were men or women. They probably commanded the officers of the Damascus synagogues and all the loyal Jews to aid Paul in seeking out and securing those who were suspected of being followers of Jesus.

Kicking Against the Goad. Rom. 7:18-25. Did the thought that he might be mistaken ever enter Paul's mind while he was persecuting the Church so relentlessly? As he saw Stephen and other martyrs die with the light of a great spiritual peace shining in their faces and prayers for the forgiveness of their persecutors upon their lips, did Paul ever stop to think what these things indicated? Did any word of Jesus haunt him day and night with an insistent suggestion that it was after all not the false statement of an impostor but the eternal

truth of Jehovah? We can give no sure answer to the foregoing questions, but many who have studied the New Testament narratives deeply believe that they may all be answered in the affirmative with a high probability of such an answer's being true. These New Testament students believe that when Jesus told Paul that it was hard for him "to kick against the goad," the words of Jesus meant that Paul was resisting an inward conviction which was urging him on toward an acceptance of the Christian religion.

In his letter to the Romans, Paul wrote of certain spiritual struggles which he had experienced at some time in his life. The experiences which he described so graphically were of the kind which we might expect in the soul of a great man sincerely mistaken and running counter to the plans of God. In telling of these spiritual struggles Paul showed how the attempt to keep the letter of the Mosaic law brought him no sense of spiritual victory, no consciousness that he was right with God. When a person does that which is well-pleasing to God there is an inner sense of peace and satisfaction, but when a person does that which is contrary to God's will this sense of peace and satisfaction is absent, even though the person sincerely believes that he is doing the will of God. This is what we call a mystic sense of our relations with the Creator of our souls. It is very hard to comprehend, but it is very real. It exists to some extent in even the crudest savages. When the idolater offers a gift to an image made of wood or stone, there is behind his act some dim consciousness that he is not right with God. Paul must have experienced this sense of estrangement from God even when he was pursuing his task of persecuting the Christians in all sincere belief that he was doing God's will.

Paul was of such a disposition that any inward uncertainties would make him all the more vehement in his attacks upon the Christians. He was a whole-souled person who must be all one thing or all the other. So long as a conviction of the truth of Christ's teachings did not gain mastery over him, it would serve as a spur to greater vigor in his persecutions of the Christians. It

may have been that it was with a sense of inner conflict that Paul rode out of the Jerusalem gates and set his face sternly toward Damascus.

The Voice at Midday. Acts 26:9-18. As Paul and his company drew near to Damascus certain events occurred which terminated abruptly Paul's career as a persecutor of the followers of Jesus. In his address before King Agrippa, Paul said that as he journeyed to Damascus he "saw on the way a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun," shining round about him and them that journeyed with him. He said that when they were all fallen to the earth, he heard a voice saying unto him, in the Hebrew language, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? it is hard for thee to kick against the goad." In answer to Paul's inquiry as to who the speaker might be, the voice replied: "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest. But arise, and stand upon thy feet: for to this end have I appeared unto thee, to appoint thee a minister and a witness both of the things wherein thou hast seen me, and of the things wherein I will appear unto thee; delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom I send thee, to open their eyes, that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive remission of sins and an inheritance among them that are sanctified by faith in me."

A Broken and a Contrite Heart. Acts 22:3-11. It may be that Paul suspected who it was that was speaking to him out of the dazzling light and saying, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" He knew whose followers he was persecuting and therefore must have suspected who it was who looked upon this persecution of his followers as a persecution of himself and who was making inquiry as to the grounds and motives for this course of action on the part of one who claimed to be doing the will of God. Paul's answer seems to intimate the same probability for he replied meekly, "Who art thou, Lord?" When Paul had been told that the one who spoke to him was none other than Jesus of Nazareth and that in persecuting the followers of Jesus he was persecuting Jesus himself, Paul answered humbly, "What shall I do, Lord?"

In that moment of repentance, the fierce persecutor of Jesus had been changed into the loyal servant of Jesus. In that moment Paul was converted, turned face about, started in the opposite direction to that in which he had been going. In that moment he renounced his allegiance to the old system of religion which sought righteousness through a rigid keeping of the interpretations which the rabbis had given concerning the law and attached his allegiance to a living personality who fulfilled with perfectness all that the Mosaic law had contained.

The Person Who Spoke Out of the Dazzling Brightness. Some years ago a book was written which bore the title, "If Christ Came to Chicago." In this book the author undertook to tell what Jesus would do if he came to dwell in one of our great cities as he once dwelt in Palestine. A person reading the book might agree, to a certain extent, with the author's ideas as to what Jesus would do in a great modern city, but most people found many things in the book with which they could not agree. The Jesus pictured by the author did not seem to them to be the Jesus pictured in the New Testament.

This is not the case with this brief account of the appearance of Jesus at the conversion of Paul. The person who spoke to Paul was evidently the same Jesus who once trod the hills of Judea and Galilee. It was like Jesus to answer Paul's inquiry with the simple statement, "I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom thou persecutest." It was like Jesus to utter no word of censure to one whom he knew to be already penitent. Like the father of the prodigal who received back his wandering son without reproof, Jesus received the one who, more than any other, had made havoc of the Church when that one was ready to renounce his former manner of life and humbly say, "What shall I do, Lord?" It was like Jesus to be thinking of the vast multitudes of the Gentile world and to point his newly accepted disciple to the whitened harvest fields of the earth. We feel as we read the account that the one who said to Paul, "I will send thee to the Gentiles, to open their eyes, that they may turn from darkness to light," is the same person who said to the disciples, "Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations."

Suggestions for Notebook Work

Trace on the notebook maps Paul's journey from Jerusalem down through Jericho and up the eastern side of the Jordan to Damascus. Have pupils record in their notebooks as many facts about conversion as they can glean from the conversion of Paul, as well as from books on the subject. (See Chart No. 3, page 23, in "The Week Day Church School," by Squires.) Picture for the notebook: Conversion of St. Paul, by Raphael, No. 284.

SUNDAY SESSION

A NEW CREATURE IN CHRIST

John 3:1-7; II Cor. 5:17; Acts 9:10-22

In the conversion of Paul we have an illustration of what Jesus meant when he told Nicodemus that if he wished to enter the Kingdom of heaven he must be born again. The changes wrought in Paul's life and character by his experiences on the road to Damascus were so far-reaching that they amounted to a new spiritual birth. Paul himself felt that this was true for he wrote to the Corinthians telling them that if a man was in Christ he was a new creature. These experiences had made Paul a new man in his thinking and his attitudes and his life purposes.

Changes Wrought in Paul by His Conversion. Rom. 3:21-26. Paul's conversion reversed his attitude toward Jesus. He had thought of Jesus as an impostor who had suffered death as a dangerous enemy of the true religion. After his conversion he thought of Jesus as God's Son whose death on the cross made it possible for God to forgive the sins of all who accept Jesus as their Saviour and Lord. Paul's conversion reversed his attitude toward the followers of Jesus. He had regarded them as deluded fanatics and heretics who were to be forced back into the Jewish religion or silenced by death. He came through his conversion to see that the little band of Christians whom he had persecuted so bitterly were the light of the world and the salt of the earth. Paul's conversion re-

versed his life purposes. He had taken it as his task to wipe Christianity from off the earth. After his conversion he took it as his life task to spread Christianity in so far as he could over all the world. Paul's conversion reversed his ideas as to how righteousness is to be attained. He had believed that the righteous life was to be gained through keeping the Mosaic law as it had been explained by the ancient rabbis. He saw after his conversion that righteousness could be attained only through faith in Jesus and through a fellowship with him which molds the life of the follower of Jesus into the likeness of the great Teacher.

Led into Damascus Blind. Acts 9:7-9. Paul's companions in travel were rendered speechless by the events on the road just outside Damascus. Seeing that Paul was blind they took him by the hand, after he had risen from the earth, and silently led him into the city, doubtless to the house where he had planned to find lodging. For three days Paul sat in total darkness and during all that time he neither ate nor drank. The house in which he lodged belonged to a certain man named Judas. He was probably one of the synagogue rulers to whom Paul had been given letters of introduction. We know only one thing about what Paul was doing during these three days of darkness. We know that he was praying. We may well believe that he was praying for guidance as he sought to rearrange his thinking of his life plans in harmony with the new light which had broken into his soul.

A Kindly Christian Friend. Acts 9:10-18. A certain Christian named Ananias lived in Damascus. He was one of the people whom Paul had come to carry away to Jerusalem for trial and for death if he should refuse to deny his Lord. To this Christian came a message from God telling him to seek Paul in the house of Judas and to lay his hands upon him that he might be cured of his blindness. Ananias was naturally loath to go near the famous persecutor whom he knew to be in Damascus for the purpose of seizing Christians and carrying them to Jerusalem. Nevertheless, at the command of the Lord, Ananias went. Paul's sight was restored and he took food and was strengthened.

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THE HOUSE OF ANANIAS IN DAMASCUS

Ananias is a good illustration of what the Christian religion can do for one who enters into it fully and devoutly. Faith in God and in Jesus as God's Son made him courageous. He was willing to come into the presence of one who had long been noted as the archenemy of the Christians. He was willing not only to risk his life in obedience to God's commands but also to forget all the past record of Paul the persecutor, to take him by the hand and address him as "Brother Paul." "Ye have heard that it was said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy: but I say unto you, Love your enemies, and pray for them that persecute you; that ye may be sons of your Father who is in heaven." Ananias had learned to obey these commandments of his Lord.

First Glimpses of a Sublime Life Task. Acts 26:16-18. It has often happened that at the moment of their conversion people have heard the call of God to a life task concerning which they have never dreamed before. It was so with Paul. To become God's messenger to the Gentile nations had probably never before entered his thoughts. As an orthodox Pharisee he would have no love for the Gentiles. He would think of them as capable of becoming children of Jehovah only through becoming Jewish proselytes. Yet even as he lay there blinded on the roadway he may have caught glimpses of the sublime task which was to be his life work. With the conviction that Jesus was indeed the Messiah came a vision of the possibility of bringing the Gentiles into the family of God through faith in Jesus. The grandeur of that thought never left him. It carried him through dangers and persecutions and fiery trials. It gave him perseverance and power and self-forgetfulness. It made a great-souled man of him. There is nothing which tends to develop soul greatness more than a vision of a sublime task and the consciousness that God has said, "I have chosen you for this task." Jeremiah saw such a vision and heard such a call and it made of him the heroic prophet of expiring Judah. Isaiah saw such a vision and heard such a call and under the inspiration of that experience he uttered words so true and so sublime that they have come down to us across all the centuries. Paul was like the

other people who have become truly great of soul. He saw a sublime task and he heard the voice of God in Jesus say, "To this end have I appeared unto thee." He was "not disobedient unto the heavenly vision." God does not deal thus with only a few people. He has work for all to do, work which is truly sublime and which will lift the souls of his children into his own likeness if they are only willing to see, to hear, and to do what God has in store for them.

Facing the Trials and Dangers of a Changed Career. Acts 9:19-22. Paul must have known that in becoming a Christian he was entering upon a new career which would be marked by misunderstandings and losses and deadly perils. He knew that in accepting Christ he had bidden good-by to all whom he had counted as his friends. He knew what attitude his father would take toward his becoming a follower of Jesus. Perhaps he shuddered to think of what his home-coming was likely to be. He knew that this step meant the loss of power and pre-eminence among his people. He had been ambitious to become a great leader of the Jewish Church. He had made notable progress in that direction. The highest seats of authority were well within sight, but in becoming a Christian he swung these doors of opportunity shut forever. He knew the dangers and difficulties of the task to which he was called for he had lived among the Gentiles and realized how difficult it is to lead even one individual from the darkness of paganism out into the light of the true God.

Knowing all this, did Paul hesitate? Was he a person who would put his hands to the plow and then turn back? Let him answer these questions for himself: "Howbeit what things were gain to me, these have I counted loss for Christ. Yea verily, and I count all things to be loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but refuse, that I may gain Christ, and be found in him." Phil. 3:7-9.

Amazed Congregations in the Synagogues of Damascus. Paul did not hesitate in letting it be known that he had become a Christian. He did not try to be a secret

disciple as Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathæa had been in the days of Jesus. He went into the synagogues of Damascus, but he did not go there to read his commission from the chief priests and to secure aid in his campaign against the Christians. He went there to proclaim that Jesus is the Son of God. The New Testament tells us that those who heard him "were amazed, and said, Is not this he that in Jerusalem made havoc of them that called on this name? and he had come hither for this intent, that he might bring them bound before the chief priests." Some of the Damascus Jews undertook to argue with Paul. They denied that Jesus is the Son of God and the Messiah for whom the Hebrews had so long waited. In this debate the Damascus Jews were worsted. Paul knew all their arguments by heart and he likewise knew how poor and illogical these arguments were. Paul had consented to the death of Stephen, but now he was taking Stephen's place as a defender of the Messiahship of Jesus. We are told that he "increased the more in strength, and confounded the Jews that dwelt at Damascus, proving that this is the Christ."

The Lesson Prayer

Our Father in heaven, we thank thee for the life of Paul. We know that it has many helpful lessons for us. Help us to understand these messages which thou wouldest speak to us through the life of thy servant who lived so many centuries ago. Grant that we may all come into those deep religious experiences which will fit us for noble and helpful living. Help us to find the tasks which thou hast chosen for us. Help us to see the possibilities for service which are before us. Make us unselfish and keep us pure that we may hear thy voice and obey thy commandments now and always. We ask in Jesus' name. Amen.

Supplemental Missionary Story

"The Men of the Shingle Beach." "The Book of Missionary Heroes," page 30.

EXPRESSIONAL SESSION

THE PLACE OF RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE IN A GREAT AND USEFUL LIFE

John 17:1, 2; Acts 2:1-4

In the preceding lessons of this chapter we came to events in the career of Paul which were primarily responsible for making his life great and useful. His education could not of itself make him great, although it had something to do with his development into greatness of character. People become great of soul, and there is no true greatness apart from soul greatness, by coming to know God as he is revealed in the teachings and in the character of Jesus. Paul began to know God as he is revealed in Jesus when he saw that great light shining upon the road which leads from Jerusalem to Damascus. That was the beginning of a continuous religious experience which lifted Paul day by day to more and more lofty attainments in the acquisition of character. That day set before him ideals toward which he was striving all the rest of his life. From that day he began to say, "One thing I do, forgetting the things which are behind, and stretching forward to the things which are before, I press on toward the goal unto the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

This is a subject of much importance to Intermediate pupils. Young people of this age who have been properly reared are looking forward to a great and useful career. They are nearing the age when most people make a life decision for or against the Christian religion. The goal which we have designated, namely, a great and useful life, is intimately related to the decision which we have mentioned, namely, a decision concerning our personal relationship to Christ. We have been accustomed to think of the decision for or against the Christian life as having momentous results for the life which we are to live in the world that lies beyond our present existence. We have thought of that decision as having to do with eternal happiness or eternal regret, and it is a good thing for us to keep this fact in view for we are the heirs of eternity; but it is well to remember that the effects of

this momentous decision begin to be manifest in the present life. Jesus said, "This is life eternal, that they should know thee the only true God, and him whom thou didst send, even Jesus Christ." We can begin to know God and Christ here and now, and therefore we can begin to enter eternal life here and now. We can come to know God and Christ better and better the longer we live; therefore, we can enter more and more into eternal life day by day. Such an entering into eternal life through God and Christ is what gives true grandeur of character to people who become truly great and widely useful.

Some Truths from the Lessons We Have Been Studying

Most of the truly great men of the world have been deeply religious. This is true of Washington, Lincoln, Columbus, William of Orange, Gustavus Adolphus, and a multitude of other men who have been great as statesmen, soldiers, and authors.

Any education which does not help a person to know God and honor Jesus Christ is sadly defective and is in danger of producing more harm than good.

If Paul had not come to know God as he is revealed in Jesus, he would have continued to be a great persecutor, but he never would have become a great preacher of the truth.

Paul first caught glimpses of his sublime life work under the inspiration of religious experience. Every young person needs the help of religion in chosing a life task.

Review Questions

1. What changes did Paul's conversion make in his attitudes?
2. Do you think that Paul was beginning to suspect the truth of the Christian religion before he saw the light on the Damascus road? Give reasons for your answer.
3. Describe Paul's conversion.
4. What evidences did Paul give that he was penitent?

5. What evidences are there that it was really Jesus who spoke to Paul?
6. Why was the conversion of Paul an important event in the history of the Church?
7. Tell what you can of Ananias.
8. What great task did Paul come to see as his life work?
9. What effect did the choosing of this task and the earnest effort to accomplish it have over the character of Paul?
10. What difficulties and dangers faced Paul after his conversion and how did he meet them?

Bible Verses

II Chron. 34:3; Ps. 27:8; 63:1; Prov. 1:23; 8:17; Isa. 1:18; Jer. 31:18; John 6:44; 17:3; Acts 2:38.

Study Topics

1. Religious Experiences of Jacob at Bethel. Gen. 28:10-22.
2. A Boy King Seeking the God of His Fathers. II Chron. 34:1-7.
3. A Little Lad Hearing the Voice of God. I Sam. 3:1-14.
4. Jesus in the Temple at the Age of Twelve. Luke 2:41-51.
5. Incidents in the Life of Lincoln Which Show That He Was Deeply Religious. (Look up incidents in any good biography of Lincoln.)
6. The Call of Isaiah to His Life Work. Isa. 6:1-8.
7. The Call of Jeremiah to His Life Work. Jer. 1:4-10.
8. The Call of Amos to His Life Work. Amos 7:14, 15.
9. How Religious Experience Changed Peter from Cowardice to Courage. Mark 14:66-72; Acts 3:11-26.
10. How Religious Experience Transformed the Character of the Apostle John. Matt. 20:20-28; I John 2:15-17.

The Lesson Truth Expressed in a Law

The Law of the Religious Life. The highest character cannot be attained, neither can the greatest life work be accomplished, without religion. Therefore:

1. We will seek to know God as he is revealed in Jesus his Son, thus cultivating our religious faculties from our youth.
2. We will refrain from all conduct which would dishonor God, since he can have no fellowship with works of darkness.
3. We will seek religious development through the study of God's Word, through the worship of God, and through the opportunities for service which God opens before us.

Projects for Putting the Lesson Truths Into Practice

Have the class make a canvass of the church school to determine how many pupils of twelve years and over are not professed followers of Jesus. Have the class plan for a Decision Day in the church school. Give opportunity to all members of the school in the Intermediate Department and beyond to subscribe to the Law of the Religious Life as given in a preceding paragraph.

CHAPTER V

THE SOJOURN IN ARABIA AND EARLY DAYS OF HIS MINISTRY

WEEK DAY SESSION

ALONE IN THE DESERTS

Gal. 1:11-17

It is a significant fact that many of the men who have become great spiritual leaders have spent a part of their lives in wilderness solitudes. Elijah was a man of the out of doors. Born somewhere in the highlands of Galilee he lived for some years in the mountains of Gilead. In times of danger or perplexity he sought refuge in lonely places like the gorge of the brook Cherith or the awful solitudes of mount Horeb. Amos was a herdsman on the borders of the Judean wilderness about Tekoa. Moses was a herder of sheep for forty years at the back of the desert that lies at the foot of mount Horeb. John the Baptist spent his early years in the desolate and lonely Wilderness of Judea. Jesus evidently loved the solitary places. He was often alone by the sea or in the mountains. Sometimes he was out alone all night. These habits of his manhood may have been with him from boyhood. Before beginning his ministry he retired to the wilderness for forty days where he was "with the wild beasts."

City life with its constant contacts with people has certain advantages as well as certain disadvantages. It teaches a person how to get along with people and how to work with people, but it tends to lessen independence in thought and conduct. City life does not always make people superficial and artificial in their lives and in their thinking, but it has a tendency to do so. On the other hand country life develops individuality. People who are much alone have an opportunity to develop the habit of clear and forceful thinking because their thoughts can

flow on without interruption. Practical phases of the religious life and the emotions of fellowship and sympathy out of which they spring are best developed when the individual is in frequent contact with his fellow men; but there are certain deep religious experiences growing out of the relations of the individual to God, which are best developed in solitude. It is not surprising, therefore, that many of the greatest spiritual leaders of the race have had both types of living. They have been much in the midst of the multitudes, but they have also spent prolonged seasons of solitude in which they learned to have fellowship with God in nature and within their own thoughts.

Paul Seeks the Solitude of the Deserts. Paul was born in a large city. He attended school in a large city when he was a boy and later he pursued his studies as a young man in another large city. He was distinctly city-bred and his city-mindedness is manifest in his words and actions until the end of his life. After his conversion Paul seems to have felt the need of an opportunity to think and pray concerning the great truths which had burst upon him so suddenly. After a brief period of preaching in the synagogues of Damascus in which Paul amazed the Jewish congregations but where he did not continue long enough to arouse violent opposition, Paul left Damascus to seek out some lonely spot where he could have a chance to think and pray and plan for the accomplishment of the task which he now realized was God's work for him.

Where Paul Went. Paul simply says that he went into Arabia. The name Arabia at that time was given to practically all of that vast peninsula, fifteen hundred miles long and eight hundred miles wide, which lies between the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf and which extends northward to beyond the city of Damascus. Paul may have gone into the deserts lying to the eastward of Damascus, or he may have found a suitable dwelling place in some of the vast ravines which traverse the tablelands south of the Dead Sea.

Many New Testament scholars believe he journeyed to the peninsula of Sinai where the law had been given to

Moses and there on sacred ground thought over the commandments of God and their fulfillment in Jesus. Elijah had fled to this region when he was in distress and fear and it may be that Paul had followed the example set by the great prophet who had lived so long before.

What Did Paul Do in Arabia? Paul gives a hint as to his purpose in withdrawing into the deserts. He says that after his conversion he did not confer with "flesh and blood," neither did he go up to Jerusalem to confer with those who were apostles before him. If he had gone to Jerusalem he would have put himself under the teaching of the apostles in order that he might learn from them concerning the gospel which Jesus taught and concerning the Messiahship of Jesus. Perhaps Paul contemplated doing this very thing. The fact that he says that he did not do it shows us that such a course of action was probably present in his mind. Paul evidently decided that the better course for him to pursue would be to seek out some retired spot where he could think out these matters for himself under the guidance of the Spirit of God. He was widely familiar with the Old Testament Scriptures. He was doubtless by this time quite familiar with what Jesus had said and done, for he had been questioning the followers of Jesus for some time in the courts where these Christians were being tried. He knew what the Christians believed about Jesus. The thing he needed to do was to adjust these conceptions concerning Jesus to the Old Testament law and to the prophecies concerning the Messiah. He now believed in Jesus as the Messiah with all his heart. His task, then, was to reexamine the Old Testament Scriptures and find out whether they could be so interpreted as to show that Jesus was the Messiah the Old Testament prophets had in view, and the kind of Messiah who could fulfill the law of Moses.

So we may believe that Paul retired into Arabia to study. He would, of course, have the Old Testament with him for he was a lover of books and we know that the Bible would be among the books and parchments which he seems to have carried about with him all his life. Paul was probably studying, meditating, readjust-

ing his thinking, reinterpreting the Old Testament writings under the new light which had come to him in Jesus. He was probably wise in his decision that he could do this better where he could be alone with God than he could under the instruction of other persons.

Paul had probably withdrawn into the deserts to pray. From the time of his conversion he was a man of prayer. He frequently urged his converts to pray without ceasing and we know that he practiced what he preached. Prayer is one of the sources of a great and useful life. It is not always mentioned in the biographies of people who were great and good, but it is usually one of the most important causes of noble character.

Paul probably retired into the solitudes that he might think over the great life task which God had assigned to him and lay plans for undertaking the work which he had been given to do. Those who have accomplished life tasks of great magnitude and of great importance have usually understood for a long time something of what their life work was to be and have thus had opportunity to lay their plans with care.

How Long Did Paul Stay in Arabia? We do not know exactly how long Paul stayed in Arabia, but we can estimate the length of the time approximately. Paul tells us that he returned to Jerusalem three years after his conversion. This three-year period would be made up of two brief residences in Damascus and the sojourn in Arabia. After his conversion he remained in Damascus for what was evidently only a little while. Luke speaks of this period as "certain days" which Paul spent with the disciples in Damascus. Acts 9:19. Then Paul left Damascus to go into Arabia. After his return from Arabia he again dwelt for a time in Damascus preaching in the synagogues and arguing with the Jewish leaders. Paul was never allowed to preach very long in the synagogues so this second residence in Damascus was probably for only a few months, though it was evidently longer than the first residence there. New Testament scholars therefore believe that Paul spent the greater part of three years in Arabia.

Paul Was No Selfish Ascetic. During the Middle

Ages there were many people who withdrew into the deserts and into lonely places among the mountains and spent all their lives in such places, seldom seeing anyone save a few of their own kind. These people were called ascetics. They went into these lonely places to pray and read the Bible. This was all right but the motives which they had in view were often wrong. While these people had given up the pleasures of society, they were really selfish in their motives. They were seeking righteousness for themselves rather than seeking to become fitted to serve their fellow men. Paul was no ascetic; he was preparing himself for service. The motives which led him into the deserts later led him into the busy market places of great cities like Athens and Ephesus. His motives were unselfish.

Suggestions for Notebook Work

Locate on the maps some of the regions of Arabia where Paul may have spent the time of his retirement. Prepare outlines for a debate on the question: "Resolved, That the Advantages of Country Life Are Greater Than the Advantages of City Life." Picture: Paul Let Down in a Basket, No. 768.

SUNDAY SESSION

PREACHING CHRIST IN DAMASCUS AND IN JERUSALEM

Acts 9:23-30; Gal. 1:18-24

From his sojourn in Arabia Paul returned to Damascus. He was now ready to undertake that great life work which had been revealed to him. He had thought his problems through. He had laid his plans. He had come into that fellowship with God which is necessary for any really great undertaking. He had readjusted his thinking so that he now understood how completely Jesus fulfilled all that the Law and the Prophets had spoken concerning the Messiah. He came back to the city where his career as a persecutor had ended that he might there begin his career as a preacher.

Trying to Undo the Evil He Had Done. We may wonder why Paul came back and preached among his own people in the synagogues of Damascus and later did the same thing in Jerusalem. If God had called him to preach to the Gentiles, why did he not go at once to some city or country where there were no Jews to oppose him and there confine his work to an effort to reach the Gentiles only? Those who have studied the life of Paul with care believe that he came back to his own people in order that he might undo so far as he could the evil which he had done. He had persecuted the Christians and had taught his fellow countrymen to believe that Jesus was an impostor. He felt that he must first of all bear witness to Jesus in the cities where he had persecuted the Christians and tried to compel them to blaspheme the name of Jesus. So he began his work after returning from Arabia by going into the Jewish synagogues of Damascus and there proclaiming that Jesus is the Messiah and the Son of God. He doubtless knew that he was risking his life by preaching among the Jews, but he had determined to follow a straight course, trusting in God to protect him and to keep him safe until his life task was accomplished.

A Conspiracy of the Damascus Jews. Acts 9:23, 24. It took some time for the opposition to Paul's preaching to take form in the synagogues of Damascus. Luke says that "many days were fulfilled" before there was a formidable opposition developed against him. During this period Paul won some people to Christ; possibly he won many. It may be that it was the fact that Paul was winning followers for Jesus that spurred the leaders of the Damascus synagogues to conspire against Paul. At all events a conspiracy was formed among the Jews. They plotted to assassinate Paul. They secured the assistance of the governor of the city and stationed armed bands at all the city gates in order that Paul might be killed if he tried to escape from the city. Day and night these assassins at the city gates watched for their intended victim. In some way Paul learned of these plots. He now had about him a little band of disciples and these Christian brethren devised a way to save their

leader from the plots of the Jews. Some of the houses of Damascus were built close against the city wall. One of these houses was occupied by a family who were Christians. Paul was brought secretly into this house, and, under the cover of darkness, his disciples let him down from a window overlooking the city wall. Having thus gained the open country which lay beyond the walls, Paul departed for Jerusalem.

Facing Dangers Unflinchingly. If Paul had been thinking chiefly of his own safety, he would not have gone to Jerusalem. It was ten times more perilous for him there than it was in Damascus. He knew that the priests and the Pharisees would look upon him as a traitor to his nation and an apostate from the faith of his fathers. He knew that they would be far more anxious to destroy him than they had been to destroy the many Christians whom he had seen condemned before the sanhedrin and led away to execution. But Paul did not waver. He had persecuted Christ's followers in Jerusalem and he would preach where he had persecuted. He would undo the evil that he had done in so far as he was able. Duty said, "Go," and so Paul went.

A Friend in Need. Acts 9:26, 27. Paul had been away from Jerusalem three years but he was still remembered there. Christians still shuddered at the mention of his name. It is not strange that the report of his conversion had not become generally known in Jerusalem. He had remained only a few days in Damascus after his conversion and before going away into Arabia. Moreover, even though the Christians of Jerusalem may have heard rumors of his conversion, we need not be surprised at their hesitancy in believing his confession of Christ to be genuine. They had every reason to fear him. They had every reason to hesitate before putting themselves and their families at his mercy.

So Paul found no welcome among the Christians at Jerusalem when he appeared and "assayed to join himself to the disciples." The Christians were afraid of him and could not believe that he was really a disciple of Jesus. It was a good thing for Paul that there was a man of kindly spirit among the Jerusalem Christians, who felt

that Paul's profession of discipleship might be genuine. This man's name was Barnabas. He was the first to meet Paul and talk matters over in a friendly way. Persuaded of the genuineness of Paul's conversion, Barnabas took Paul and brought him to the apostles. There he told of the striking events on the Damascus road which had accomplished Paul's conversion. He told how Paul had preached boldly in Damascus proclaiming the Messiahship of Jesus. Thus introduced by Barnabas, Paul was welcomed into the little band of people who were the followers of Jesus in Jerusalem, and there was great rejoicing at the power of God which was able to turn their deadliest enemy into a trusted friend.

A Conspiracy of the Jews in Jerusalem. Acts 9:28-30. For fifteen days Paul was with the Christians in Jerusalem. He went about boldly preaching that Jesus is the Messiah and the Son of God. His work was especially with the Jews of the Dispersion who had been the leaders in the attack upon Stephen and who were still violently opposed to the Christians. A plot to kill Paul was quickly formed among the Jews of the Dispersion. His life was in deadly peril for there was every reason to believe that the enemies of the Church could secure his death even more easily than they had succeeded in putting Stephen to death. Paul's new-found brethren urged him to depart to a place of safety. Paul was loath to go. He had been in Jerusalem only two weeks and did not feel that he had yet done all that he ought to do to make amends for his evil course as a persecutor. He grimly determined to stay and face the dangers, trusting in God to protect him if that seemed best to the divine wisdom, willing to lay down his life then and there if such should prove to be the will of God.

A Vision in the Temple. Acts 22:17-21. Going boldly into the Temple, Paul lifted his heart to God in prayer, seeking strength and guidance. As he prayed he fell into a kind of trance. He seemed to see Jesus once more, standing beside him and speaking to him as he had spoken to him on the road to Damascus. "Make haste, and get thee quickly out of Jerusalem; because they will not receive of thee testimony concerning me"—such was

the commandment which Paul heard as he beheld the vision. Paul was commanded to leave Jerusalem not for personal safety, but because he was not the person to bear witness best there. The Jews of Jerusalem were mad against him with a frenzied prejudice because he had been such a prominent leader in the persecutions and had now gone over to the Christians. There were others who could bear more effective testimony in Jerusalem than Paul could.

That which was given as a reason for Paul's not staying in Jerusalem seemed to him to be a strong cause for his remaining there. He pleaded that he might be permitted to remain. He said, "Lord, they themselves know that I imprisoned and beat in every synagogue them that believed on thee: and when the blood of Stephen thy witness was shed, I also was standing by, and consenting, and keeping the garments of them that slew him." Paul seems to have felt that he could best wipe out the evil he had wrought by giving his life on the spot where Stephen had been stoned to death. Jesus had different plans, however. It was no time for argument, so there came the firm command: "Depart: for I will send thee forth far hence unto the Gentiles."

Sent Away to Tarsus. Acts 9:30. Thus persuaded that it was the will of Jesus that he should leave Jerusalem, Paul consented to the advice of his fellow Christians. They at once set about the task of getting him safely out of Jerusalem. Some of the Christians went with Paul as far as Cæsarea, on the Mediterranean Sea west of Jerusalem. From that city Paul started for Tarsus, the home of his boyhood. He probably went by sea as that was the quickest route, and the one usually followed by travelers of that time.

The Lesson Prayer

Give us, our Father in heaven, a deep interest in the work of missions. The task which thy servants of the first century began with enthusiasm and devotion is not yet completed. Forgive us of this age who have failed to labor at this task with the unselfish devotion which

was manifested by thy servants of old. If we cannot go ourselves into other lands to bear witness for Jesus, we know that we can bear witness at home and we can help to send those who are able to go. Give us, then, willing hearts and consecrated lives that we may do our part in the great task which thou hast given unto those who believe on thy Son. We ask in his name. Amen.

SUPPLEMENTAL MISSIONARY STORY

"The Knight of a New Crusade." "The Book of Missionary Heroes," page 36.

EXPRESSIONAL SESSION

THE PLACE OF WHOLE-SOULED DEVOTION IN A GREAT AND USEFUL LIFE

I Tim. 4:15, 16

In the verses chosen for consideration in this meeting, Paul is urging his young friend, Timothy, to throw himself into his work with whole-souled devotion. In giving this advice Paul was asking his young helper to do no more than he himself had been long accustomed to do. Paul threw himself with all his might into anything he undertook. He did this as a persecutor and he did it as a preacher of the gospel. He worked in this way all his life. He was constantly preaching, teaching, traveling, holding conversation with individuals, writing letters to distant churches, organizing congregations. He threw his whole soul into the work he had undertaken. He knew that such whole-souled devotion coupled with habits of prayer secured results. He wished his young friend to be a useful missionary and preacher, so he urged him to follow the methods which he had found to be effective. By entering upon his work with enthusiastic devotion, Timothy would save others from the errors and transgressions which were marring their lives; Paul knew this to be true, so he urged Timothy to give himself wholly to his task.

Paul knew something else. He knew that no person can throw himself wholly into a great task without having his labors return in blessing upon his own soul. The accomplishment of a great life task by giving to it a whole-souled devotion results in greatness of soul for the one who lays hold upon the task and accomplishes it. So Paul could say truthfully: "Be diligent in these things; give thyself wholly to them; . . . for in doing this thou shalt save both thyself and them that hear thee."

Some Truths from the Lessons We Have Been Studying

We need God's help in determining what our life work is to be, and when he reveals it to us we owe it to him to do with our might what he gives us to do.

The men and women who have accomplished great things in life have developed early in youth the power to concentrate their attention upon a single task.

Men and women who accomplish great things are usually enthusiastic in their work.

The fact that Paul was willing to go away into the deserts for three years, in order that he might meditate on his life work and pray for guidance, shows that he took his great task seriously.

Paul was so devoted to his task that neither the threats of his enemies nor the misunderstandings of his friends could turn him from it.

Review Questions

1. Name some great spiritual leaders who have spent part of their lives in solitude.
2. What did Paul probably do when he was in Arabia?
3. How long did Paul stay in Arabia?
4. Why did not Paul go at once to the Gentiles after he returned from Arabia?
5. Tell of Paul's escape from Damascus.
6. Why was it especially dangerous for Paul to go to Jerusalem?
7. Tell how Barnabas befriended Paul.

8. Why did Paul leave Jerusalem and go to Tarsus?
9. Tell of Paul's vision in the Temple.
10. Would it be hard for Paul to go back to Tarsus? Why?

Bible Verses

Deut. 11:13, 14; Josh. 22:5; I Sam. 12:20; I Kings 14:7, 8; I Chron. 12:33; II Chron. 15:12; Matt. 22:37, 38; 16:24, 25; Rev. 3:15, 16.

Study Topics

1. God's Message to a Lukewarm Church. Rev. 3:14, 15.
2. A Day in the Life of Jesus. Mark 1:21-35.
3. Gideon's Little Army of Whole-Hearted Followers. Judg., ch. 7.
4. How Jesus Refused Half-Hearted Followers. Luke 9:57-62.
5. Why It Is a Good Thing for Our Tasks If We Do Them with Our Might.
6. Why It Is a Good Thing for Us If We Do Our Tasks with All Our Might.
7. What Jesus Meant When He Said That If Anyone Did Not Forsake All that He Had, He Could Not Become a Disciple.
8. Ways in Which Paul Showed Whole-Souled Devotion to His Task.
9. Ways in Which We Can Show Whole-Souled Devotion to the Church.
10. Great Inventors Who Have Won Through Whole-Souled Devotion to Their Work.

The Lesson Truth Expressed in a Law

The Law of Whole-Souled Devotion. Nothing of much consequence is ever accomplished by a person who does his task in a half-hearted way. Therefore:

1. We will endeavor to give diligent and enthusiastic attention to our daily tasks.
2. We will give careful thought to the selection of a life work, seeking the advice of friends and the guidance

of God in making this important decision, and when our life tasks are determined, we will give ourselves wholly to them.

3. Whatever our life tasks may be, we will endeavor to make them a service to our fellow men and an honor to God.

Projects for Putting the Lesson Truths Into Practice

Have each pupil select the study in school which is hardest for him, and for a stated period devote himself whole-heartedly to its mastery. Compare experiences in the class. Find out how many have done better work in the study they have selected. Find out whether any have gained something of a liking for the study which was disliked. The same method may be used with regard to disagreeable chores which the pupils do at home. Choose a task of some difficulty which the class is to undertake for the church, or the church school, and which will last for some weeks. The organization of a church-school orchestra, and the acquiring of skill sufficient to enable this orchestra to render valuable service, is an illustration of the kind of service that is meant. Help the class to develop enthusiastic, whole-souled, and persevering devotion to the undertaking they select.

CHAPTER VI

A SECOND PERIOD OF OBSCURITY

WEEK DAY SESSION

BIDDING GOOD-BY TO JERUSALEM

Gal. 1:18-24; 2:1

We have seen how Paul entered a period of obscurity when he left Jerusalem after completing his studies there. He entered a second period of obscurity when he again left Jerusalem for Tarsus some three years after his conversion. For ten years we lose sight of him to a certain extent. We know that during these ten years he was laboring in Tarsus and in various sections of Cilicia and Syria. We know little of the details of his work during this period.

When Paul left Jerusalem with some Christian brethren who were to accompany him as far as Cæsarea, he may have thought that he was bidding good-by to Jerusalem forever. He had been told to depart and had been divinely bidden to go afar to the Gentiles. He was in fact absent from Jerusalem for more than ten years. The first years of this period were spent in missionary work in Cilicia and Syria with Tarsus as his headquarters. His work was probably chiefly among the Gentiles, though he may have followed his usual custom of preaching first in the synagogues and to the Jews, whenever he had an opportunity to do so on entering a new field.

He Had Done What He Could. When Paul departed from Jerusalem for Tarsus he was acting under a commandment to go afar to the Gentiles. He had closed that part of his ministry which had to with the Jews especially. He had borne witness to Jesus as the Son of God in the cities where he had persecuted the Christians and beaten them and caused them to be put to death. He had faced death both in Damascus and in Jerusalem. He had wished to stay in Jerusalem for a longer time that he might

accomplish more in his efforts to undo the evil he had done, but he was not permitted to do so, having been told in a vision that he was to depart from the city. He had done what he could to make amends for the ravages he had committed against the Church of Christ.

Lifelong Regrets. I Cor. 15:9. Paul had done what he could to make amends for the evil he had done as a persecutor of the Church. It is no easy task, however, to stop the flood of evil consequences which flows from even one misdeed, and Paul had committed many, many evil acts against the cause of Christ. His career as a persecutor was a cause of lifelong regret to him. In his hours of greatest accomplishment the memory of his activities as a persecutor rose up to mingle the bitterness of remorse with the sweetness of his victories. Sometimes when he was inclined to congratulate himself on the great things he had accomplished as a disciple of Jesus, there would come a thought which caused a blush of shame. With bowed head he would at such times say, "For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God."

God is able in a wonderful way to overrule evil. He makes the wrath of man to praise him. Nevertheless those who truly repent of their evil deeds never cease to regret having transgressed the commandments of God. The persecutions which Paul carried on against the Christians give us a good illustration of this principle. In a way these persecutions were a blessing to the Church. They caused the Christians to depart from Jerusalem and to go into distant lands bearing the message concerning a Saviour. Paul never felt, however, that this fact lessened in any way his guilt as a persecutor. To the last day of his life he regretted that he had consented to the death of Stephen and beaten the Christians in the synagogues and voted for a death penalty when they were tried before the sanhedrin.

Obedient to the Church. The impression has grown up that Paul was a kind of "free lance" among the first-century Christians; that is, that he did pretty much as he pleased among his brethren of the Church and that he paid little attention to Church authority. It is well to

remember in this connection that in going to Tarsus he was acting in harmony with the expressed wishes of the apostles who were then dwelling in Jerusalem. As we pursue our study we shall see that it was Paul's enemies who really disregarded the commandments of the Church while Paul was uniformly obedient to the expressed wishes of the Church and of the apostles who were looked upon as its official head.

Drawing Nearer to His Great Life Task. When Paul left Jerusalem he was drawing nearer his great life work, but he was by no means to enter fully upon it at once. For some ten years more his work was to be, in part at least, among his own people. For ten years his work was to be on rather a small scale and beset with many hindrances. God often leads people through long periods of waiting when he is getting them ready for a great life work. Columbus waited and labored twenty years before he set sail to find a new route to the Indies. Sir Isaac Newton labored almost as long before the law of gravitation was demonstrated. Jesus spent thirty years at Nazareth and during most of that time he was eager to be about his Father's business. Such periods of prolonged delay are a part of the education through which God fits people for great tasks.

Turning Courageously Homeward. It must have been hard for Paul to come back to Damascus and to preach Christ where he had intended to persecute the Christians. It must have been harder still for him to come again into Jerusalem where he had been the leader of the persecutions. But a still harder task was now before him. He was facing homeward. He was going to meet his relatives who were strict Pharisees. He was going to meet people whom he had known since boyhood. He was going back to the old home town, but, he was going back as a professed follower of the Nazarene Teacher whose disciples he had persecuted. Many young converts have found it much more difficult to bear testimony among their kinsfolk and among those whom they have known from childhood than among other people to whom they are less intimately related. Young converts have found this kind of witnessing hard even when their home

friends and relatives are heartily in sympathy with them. With Paul there was no hope for a friendly or even tolerant attitude toward the step he had taken in becoming a Christian. He knew how his parents and friends would feel about the matter.

Paul had not feared to go back to Damascus in the face of certain opposition and persecution. He had not hesitated to go to Jerusalem even though his life was in danger every moment that he spent within the walls of the city. But he was going now where he was certain to meet experiences more trying than any which had yet fallen to his lot. As a Jewish lad he had been taught to honor his father and mother. He had always regarded their wishes as the law of his life. He foresaw now that it would in all probability be necessary for him either to go contrary to the wishes of his family or to become delinquent in the duties which he owed to God.

As a little boy in the synagogue school at Tarsus he had learned to honor his teachers. He had come to believe that they were the representatives of God and that to disobey them in any way was to commit a great sin against Jehovah. He knew that these teachers, now grown old, could never understand why he had become a follower of Jesus. He knew that his family could never understand. He knew that none of his acquaintances in Tarsus, the companions of his boyhood years, could understand. Tarsus offered less physical danger than Jerusalem, but his home-coming seemed certain to result in the loss of relationships which he valued more than life.

A Servant of Jesus. All of Paul's letters begin with some such phrase as "Paul a servant of Jesus Christ." The Greek word which is translated "servant" means a bond servant or slave. Paul meant that he belonged entirely to Jesus. It was this supreme loyalty to Jesus that was to be tested when Paul entered the home of his childhood. It was the possibility of such a situation that Jesus had in view when he said that if any person loved father or mother more than that person loved him, there was no possibility of that person's becoming a real disciple. It does not often happen that in order to obey Jesus

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a person must be disobedient to parents. This was likely to happen in Paul's case, however, and he doubtless was fully aware of it as he drew near his home. What ought he to do? Should he obey his Pharisee father and give up faith in Jesus, or should he obey Jesus and lose the friendship of his father and all the rest of the family? Paul probably thought these problems over and determined that his first and highest allegiance was to Jesus. He felt that if he was true to that allegiance he could not be really untrue to any other rightful relationship. He probably saw that under such circumstances the law of obedience to parents gave way to a higher law, the commandment to obey and honor God.

Suggestions for Notebook Work

Locate Cæsarea on the notebook maps. Write in the notebooks a brief letter such as Paul might have written to his friend Ananias in Damascus, telling him of his experiences in Jerusalem and his reasons for leaving that city to go to Tarsus. Picture: Cæsarea in Palestine, No. 309.

SUNDAY SESSION

BEARING WITNESS IN THE OLD HOME TOWN

Eph. 6:4; Col. 3:21; II Cor. 11:23-26; Acts 11:19-26

Of the fourteen years which elapsed from the time Paul left Jerusalem for Tarsus until he returned to Jerusalem, ten years were spent in Syria and Cilicia with Tarsus as headquarters. This was, as has been said in a preceding paragraph, a time of obscurity in the life story of Paul. It was, however, a time of much importance since it immediately preceded his launching forth upon the greatest enterprises of his career. It was a time of preparation, a time when Paul was gaining practical knowledge through experience. It is therefore worth our while to consider some of the probable events and circumstances of this period of Paul's life, even though some of our conclusions will rest on probabilities rather than on historical evidence.

A Family Tragedy and an Unbroken Silence. Eph. 6:4; Col. 3:21. It is almost certain that Paul's homecoming was marked by some terrible family clash which resulted in the lifelong alienation of his relatives. Paul's father was a strict Pharisee. He would look upon his son's becoming a Christian as an appalling calamity. He would make every effort to turn his son back to the religion of the forefathers. He would not only urge this action but also command it with all the authority which belonged to a Jewish father. Of course, Paul would not deny Jesus. He would not do it to save his life in Damascus or Jerusalem and he could not do it even though it alienated his father and his other relatives and caused them to think of him as no longer related to them in any way.

In all his writings Paul does not mention his family even once. It seems probable that this unbroken silence is the result of the clash with his relatives which occurred when he returned to Tarsus after becoming a Christian. Here and there in Paul's writings are little remarks which seem to hint at this sad experience. Whenever he happened to be giving advice to people about family matters, he seems to have thought about the possibility that the father of the household might be so severe with his children as to cause them to become discouraged. So we find him repeating some such admonition as, "Fathers, provoke not your children, that they be not discouraged." This can hardly be said to be an admonition most often needed by fathers. There are many other things which Paul might have said. It seems probable, therefore, that in this habit of Paul's we have evidence of sad memories concerning a father who disowned his son and banished him forever from home because he would not renounce his faith in Jesus as the Messiah and the Son of God.

Lifelong Enemies. Paul's acceptance of Jesus as the Messiah turned practically all his friends into enemies. Most of these former friends never forgave Paul. They had not forgotten him when many years after his conversion he came back to Jerusalem. We find these enemies at one time banding themselves together with an oath that they would neither eat nor drink until they

had slain Paul. Paul was a born fighter and he refused to change his plans even though his enemies hounded him on every hand. Nevertheless, we have reason to believe that this loss of his friends cast a shadow across his life from time to time. It was a part of the price which he was glad to pay in order to win fellowship with Jesus, but it was a real loss, and a loss which he felt deeply, for his was a warm and generous soul to which friendships meant a great deal.

Ten Years of Hard and Dangerous Toil. II Cor. 11:23-26. In this passage from the second letter which Paul wrote to the church in Corinth, Paul enumerated the various hardships and dangers through which he had passed as a missionary. He wrote of having been flogged on five different occasions by the Jews and stated that on each of these occasions he received thirty-nine strokes of the scourge. He said that he was beaten with rods three times, stoned once, shipwrecked three times. He mentioned being "in perils of rivers, in perils of robbers, in perils from my countrymen, in perils from the Gentiles, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren." As we read these words we realize how little of the life of Paul is recorded in the New Testament. We can identify some of these statements with incidents of Paul's life mentioned in The Acts of the Apostles and in other parts of the New Testament. Most of them, however, are not mentioned anywhere else in The Acts or in the writings of Paul himself.

It is probable that some of the adventures here mentioned occurred during the ten years which Paul spent in Cilicia and Syria. These were years of hard toil for Paul. They were years when he was practically alone. He had no great church behind him as was the case after he went to Antioch. Cast off by his family he must earn all his living by working as a tentmaker. He must have labored under great difficulties and constant discouragements for there were many Jews in Cilicia and Syria and they doubtless constantly opposed him and sought to destroy both him and the churches which he organized. In this time of testing, which was ten years long, Paul

was not found wanting. No task could tire him out. No enemy could frighten him away from the field. He kept right on in spite of failures and discouragements and hardships and dangers. He won out for he succeeded in founding Christian churches throughout the whole region. The fame of Paul's accomplishments at last reached the church in Jerusalem. The Christians in that city said to one another, "He that once persecuted us now preacheth the faith of which he once made havoc." "And they glorified God." Gal. 1:23, 24. Paul had thus, by his diligence and his zeal in a hard and discouraging field of labor, broken through the obscurity which had enveloped him. Once famed as the persecutor of the Christians he was now becoming known as one of the greatest of the followers of Jesus.

Called to a Great Opportunity. Acts 11:19-26. The Christians who had fled from Jerusalem during the persecutions which followed the death of Stephen came down to Phœnicia, Cyprus, and Antioch preaching the gospel everywhere they went. For the most part these fugitives preached to Jews only, but there were certain people from Cyprus and Cyrene who on coming into Antioch began to preach to Greeks as well as Jews. Great numbers of Greeks became believers in Jesus under the instruction of these Christian preachers and teachers.

Reports concerning this great religious awakening among the Gentile people of Antioch finally reached the heads of the church in Jerusalem. They sent Barnabas to investigate. The Christians in Jerusalem were not quite sure that the gospel ought to be preached to Gentiles just as it was preached to Jews. When Barnabas came to Antioch "and had seen the grace of God," he "was glad; and he exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord."

The church at Antioch in a little while became one of the greatest in the world. Its work among the Gentiles was so successful that a new door for the spread of Christianity was swung wide open. Barnabas was a wise man; therefore, he realized the greatness of the opportunity which had presented itself in Antioch. He saw the need for a great leader who could seize this opportunity and

make the most of it for the spread of the Christian religion throughout the world. Barnabas was humble enough to realize that he was not the best person for such a position. He thought of Paul with whom he had talked in Jerusalem ten years before and whom he had brought to the apostles with words of commendation. Perhaps Paul had at that time told Barnabas something about his hopes concerning the conversion of the Gentiles to the Christian religion. Barnabas believed that Paul was the one man for the place. He had lately heard that Paul was laboring in Cilicia and Syria with his headquarters in Tarsus and that he was successful in his work of establishing churches. So Barnabas left Antioch to go to Tarsus in search of Paul.

Paul Leaves Tarsus to Take Up the Work in Antioch. Barnabas came to Tarsus where he succeeded in finding Paul. He laid before his friend the situation in Antioch, telling him about the great work among the Gentiles. Paul had the instincts of a great military leader. He knew that Antioch was a strategic point. He realized that it was in many ways well fitted to become the center of a world-wide work among the Gentiles. Paul could not be driven from his field in Cilicia and Syria by dangers and hardships, but when a new and promising opportunity for service in his chosen field opened before him in another section, it was a different matter. So he bade good-by to his friends in Cilicia and Syria and came with Barnabas to Antioch. He was at last face to face with the opportunity for which his soul had hungered for more than a dozen years. He was ready to begin in real earnest his great life task.

The Lesson Prayer

We thank thee, our Father in heaven, for the life of heroic devotion about which we have been studying. We know that the apostles and other Christian believers of the early Church through their labors and prayers laid the foundations of the Christian Church. Teach us to be like them in our devotion to the truth and in our zeal to work in thy service. Help us to do small tasks well. Show us how to be faithful under trying and dis-

couraging circumstances. Lead us into the kind of service which we can do best and in which we can do most good. Give all who are professed followers of Jesus that kind of fidelity which was manifested by thy servant Paul and thus make it possible for the Church to win all the world to thee and thy Son, our Saviour. We ask in his name. Amen.

SUPPLEMENTAL MISSIONARY STORY

"Francis Cœur-de-Lion." "The Book of Missionary Heroes," page 47.

EXPRESSIONAL SESSION

THE PLACE OF PERSEVERANCE IN A GREAT AND USEFUL LIFE

Eph. 6:10-20

Our Scripture lesson is one of the best-known utterances of Paul. It sounds like a chapter out of his own life history. He was evidently speaking out of his own experiences. His many admonitions contain no recommendations for actions which he had not tried himself. He was "strong in the Lord, and in the strength of his might," because he had taken upon himself the whole armor of God. He had been armed with the sword of the Spirit. He had been persevering in prayer and in labor. We have just been studying about a period of Paul's life which called for unconquerable perseverance. His stay of ten years in Cilicia and Syria shows that he was persevering under long-continued hardships and discouragements. What if he had become discouraged after five or six years of seemingly unprofitable labor at the beginning of this period? What if he had said, "I can't do anything here; the difficulties are too great; if I could go to some great city like Antioch, or Ephesus, or Rome, where there are better opportunities, I know I could succeed, but I am only wasting my life here and I am going to give up the task"? If Paul had said this to himself and then carried out his words, we never should have heard of him. If he had not been persevering in Cilicia and Syria, he never would have been called to Antioch.

Some Truths from the Lessons We Have Been Studying

It was thirteen or fourteen years from the time when Paul first caught sight of his life task to the time when he really entered upon it. During all that time he labored on under great difficulties and dangers with unwavering perseverance.

Paul persevered in his work even when his family turned against him. Few people in our land and in our day have such an experience as this. Our relatives and friends are usually glad to help us onward in Christian living.

Paul's time of hardest testing came just before the door of a great opportunity swung wide before him. It is often thus in life. God tries us out to see if we are really ready for the great opportunity.

Barnabas was one of these persevering friends who can never do enough for those whom they respect and love. He did Paul two great acts of kindness. He persuaded the apostles in Jerusalem that Paul was really sincere in his desire to become a disciple of Jesus. He went to Tarsus and searched for Paul until he found him and brought him back to Antioch.

Review Questions

1. Name two periods of obscurity in the life of Paul.
2. What did Paul do to make amends for the evil he had done as a persecutor?
3. Show that Paul regretted his persecuting activities as long as he lived.
4. Show that Paul was obedient to the Church.
5. Why was it hard for Paul to go back to Tarsus after becoming a Christian?
6. What did Paul mean by calling himself the "servant of Jesus"?
7. Give evidences that Paul's family disowned him.
8. Tell of Paul's work in Cilicia and Syria.
9. What kind of man was Barnabas?
10. Tell of the growth of the church in Antioch.

Bible Verses

Matt. 24:13; Mark 13:13; Luke 9:62; Acts 13:43; I Cor. 15:58; 16:13; Col. 1:23; II Tim. 4:7, 8; Heb. 10:23; Rev. 2:25.

Study Topics

1. The Perseverance of a Great Inventor. (Look up the life of an inventor such as Elias Howe, Professor Morse, or Eli Whitney.)
2. The Perseverance of a Great Missionary. (Look up the life of a missionary such as Livingstone, John G. Paton, or Adoniram Judson.)
3. The Perseverance of a Great Explorer. (Look up the life of a great explorer such as Henry Hudson, Christopher Columbus, or Sir Francis Drake.)
4. Incidents in the Life of Jesus Which Show His Perseverance.
5. Some of Paul's Admonitions to Perseverance. Gal. 6:9, 10; II Thess. 3:13.
6. Perseverance as a Characteristic of the Divine Nature. Isa. 40:28; Luke 15:3-7.
7. Why Perseverance Is Necessary to High Attainments in Scholarship.
8. Why Perseverance Is Especially Needed in the Work of the Church.
9. Perseverance a Characteristic of Great Leaders. Illustration: Moses.
10. The Word "Perseverance" and Some of Its Synonyms. (Look up derivation of the word in a dictionary.)

The Lesson Truth Expressed in a Law

The Law of Perseverance. No great task is ever accomplished without that earnest and continuous devotion which we name perseverance. Therefore:

1. We will perseveringly strive to become physically, intellectually, and spiritually prepared for whatever work God would have us do.
2. We will bring persevering effort to the task which God assigns us.
3. We will set as our character goal the high standards manifested in the teachings and in the life of Jesus

and we will strive to attain these standards through prayer and persevering labor.

Projects for Putting the Lesson Truths Into Practice

If the closing suggestions of preceding chapters have been carried out, the class will now be engaged in one or more projects. The success of these undertakings will call for persevering effort. The pupils will thus have an opportunity to put the truths of this lesson into practice. Pupils who are professed followers of Christ will have need for perseverance in well-doing. The skilled teacher will be in close sympathy with all pupils and will help them to apply the lesson truths to their personal problems.

CHAPTER VII

PASTOR AND LEADER OF A GREAT CHURCH

WEEK DAY SESSION

A YOKEFELLOW WITH BARNABAS

Acts 4:36, 37; 9:26-30; 11:25, 26

The Bible speaks of one chasing a thousand and two putting ten thousand to flight. This is a striking way of saying that two people working together can accomplish far more than two people working separately. People who have accomplished great tasks in their lives usually owe some of their success to this principle. They have had the ability to choose the right kind of helpers and they have been able to work with their helpers effectively. Paul had these abilities in a very high degree. He chose able helpers and he was capable of working with them so as to accomplish great tasks through cooperation. We shall learn how Barnabas, Silas, Timothy, Titus, Luke, John Mark, and others became helpers of Paul. In this lesson we are to learn about what Paul accomplished in Antioch with the help of his first yokefellow, Barnabas.

The City of Antioch. Paul had now come to labor in one of the greatest cities of the Roman Empire. Only Rome and Alexandria were considered to be more important cities than Antioch. It lay on the south bank of the Orontes River, twenty miles from the sea. Antioch was noted for its beautiful temples and for its great school of philosophy. The atmosphere of the city was of the sort in which Paul would feel quite at home for it was much like that of the city of Tarsus in which Paul had lived as a boy. Antioch was likewise noted for its industry and its commerce. Ships from ports in all parts of the known world ascended the Orontes to its wharves. It was located on the great land routes of travel which connected Asia with Europe and Africa. Paul had foreseen that a strong Christian church in Antioch would make its influence felt in three continents.

A Strong Team. Paul and Barnabas made a strong team of workers. They were quite unlike each other in most respects, but this unlikeness enabled them to help one another. Paul was enthusiastic, quick-tempered, and impulsive. He was sometimes in danger of making enemies unnecessarily by the vigor of his assaults upon those whom he considered as his opponents. Barnabas was quite the opposite of Paul in this respect. He was mild-mannered and kindly. He won people not by forcibly overwhelming them with his logic and his enthusiasm, but by gradually leading them to see the truth as he believed it and lived it. Some people are won to the Christian life in Paul's way, others are won in Barnabas' way. So it came to pass that Paul and Barnabas working together were able to win all sorts of people to a faith in Jesus. Paul alone or Barnabas alone might have won a thousand people to the Christian Church during the year they labored in Antioch, but Paul and Barnabas working together may have won ten thousand because each helped the other.

A Church of Vision and Brotherhood. The church to the leadership of which Paul had now been called was not only one of the largest Christian churches in the world at that time, but it was also one of the most enterprising and progressive. The church in Antioch had been the first to admit Gentiles freely into its fellowship and on the same conditions as Jews. It was a church which had grasped the fact that in Jesus there is no Jew or Greek, bond or free, but that all are one great family in the Christian fellowship. With such a church back of him Paul now had a splendid opportunity to realize his long-cherished dream of winning the Gentiles to the cause of Christ.

The Antioch church manifested its sense of universal brotherhood in a very striking way as we shall see in the next lesson. This sense of brotherhood gave the Antioch church vision. The Christians in Antioch saw the possibility of carrying out Christ's commandment to make disciples of all nations. They saw it more clearly than the church at Jerusalem saw it. The church of Antioch was filled with missionary interest and zeal.

Great Progress Under the Leadership of Paul and Barnabas. When a church like the church of Antioch and leaders like Paul and Barnabas get together there is always great progress. For a year Paul and Barnabas gave themselves wholly to organizing and recruiting and instructing the church in Antioch. It was like a great school in which Paul and Barnabas were the leading teachers. The account says, "And it came to pass, that even for a whole year they were gathered together with the church, and taught much people." Paul's preparation for teaching now made him a power for good in Antioch. If he had neglected his school tasks when he was a little boy in the synagogue school of Tarsus, or had not done his work well when he was a lad in the school of Gamaliel at Jerusalem, the effect of his neglect would have become manifest as he labored thus in Antioch after many years. The kind of life we live as boys or girls has much to do with our success or failure when we are men and women.

Under the leadership of Paul and Barnabas the church of Antioch increased in numbers. It grew because Paul and Barnabas were hard workers; they were at their task day and night, seeking to persuade old and young that Jesus is the Saviour of the world. It grew because not only Paul and Barnabas worked, but all the members of the church worked with them. God honors labor faithfully performed, and he gave the Antioch church the increase which was its due.

The church of Antioch grew, too, because it was not narrow in its views and exclusive in its fellowship. If the members of the church had been unwilling to have fellowship with people who were poor, or unlearned, or of foreign parentage, the hard work of Paul and Barnabas would have been to a large extent wasted.

The church of Antioch increased in knowledge. The people were anxious to learn. They came to school and sat at the feet of Paul and Barnabas as their instructors. If the people had not been anxious to learn more about the Christian faith, the skill of their leaders would have been of little use; their attempts to teach would have ended in failure, for the teaching process requires both

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ANTIOCH IN SYRIA

teachers who have knowledge and skill and pupils who are willing and anxious to learn.

The church of Antioch increased in its activities under the leadership of Paul and Barnabas. We shall see how their growing interest in the spread of God's Kingdom led them at the end of a year to send their leaders out on the first great organized missionary enterprise of the Christian Church and how their sense of universal brotherhood caused them to come to the rescue when their brethren in Judea were threatened with starvation.

The Followers of Jesus Are Given a New Name. Acts 11:26. Up to this time the Gentile peoples had looked upon the Christian religion as just a different type of the Jewish religion. But in Antioch the Gentiles began to discover that the Christians were very different from the Jews whom they had known previously. They had become accustomed to the ways of the Pharisees and scribes and other Jews who were supposed to be especially devoted to religion. They knew that these Jews would not eat with a Gentile, would not enter a Gentile's house, would wash themselves thoroughly if they had been in the market place and thought that some Gentile might have touched them. The Christians of Antioch did not act in this way toward Gentiles. They received them into their homes, ate with them, showed that they looked upon them as brothers, received them into their Church, taught that Jesus is the Lord of Gentiles as well as of Jews and has come to establish a Kingdom of love and service for all who will enter in. The Gentiles of Antioch came to feel that the name "Jew" did not fit the followers of Jesus, so they named these people after their great leader of whom they were always speaking and whom they worshiped as the Son of God. They called the followers of Jesus "Christians," or followers of the Christ.

Bible students used to think that the name was given as a term of reproach and as a nickname, much as rude children of our land sometimes call certain people from a foreign land "Dagoes" or "Hunkies." Many students of the New Testament now believe that the name did not originate as a term of reproach, but that it was at the first a term used to designate the followers of

Jesus in distinction from the Jews who still rejected Jesus as the Messiah and clung to the religion of the Jewish leaders of that day.

The Leaven of the Kingdom. Jesus once told his disciples that the Kingdom of heaven is like leaven, or yeast, "which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, till it was all leavened." The truth of this statement became more and more evident as Paul and Barnabas labored on in Antioch. The influence of what they were doing there spread all over that great city and out into the neighboring towns. Christians removed from Antioch to distant parts of the Roman Empire and they carried their Christianity with them. These followers of Jesus who had gone out from the church of Antioch became centers of influence around which Christian churches sprang up in distant lands. The Kingdom of God is to be established in just this way. Each believer in Jesus is an instrument for spreading the Kingdom and establishing it. God's plan cannot fail unless the instruments on which he has put his dependence fail.

Suggestions for Notebook Work

Subject for essay: "The Church in Antioch and What Made It Great." Picture: The Prophecy of Agabus, No. 649.

SUNDAY SESSION

BEARER OF FAMINE RELIEF

Acts 11:27-30; 12:25

Some years ago the Yang-tse-Kiang river of China burst through its levees, spreading disaster over a vast territory. Many thousands of people fled from their homes and gathered in hungry throngs along the borders of the great yellow flood which had destroyed their homes and their crops. An American who happened to be in China at the time tells of an incident which illustrates the attitude of the wealthy Chinese officials of that day toward their unfortunate brethren. A Chinese man-

darin was seen approaching a multitude of refugees by the side of the flooded river. The official called out to his fellow countrymen, telling them that the flood had destroyed all the crops and there would be nothing for them to eat. He advised them to cast themselves into the water and thus escape a slow death by starvation. When the victims of the flood saw the precious stones flashing in the mandarin's signet rings and realized that he was really a high official, many of them took his advice and threw themselves into the muddy torrent. The rings on the mandarin's fingers might have been sold for enough money to buy food sufficient to save many lives, but the mandarin did not seem even to think of the possibility of such an action on his part. In this lesson we are to learn how Christianity began to put a new spirit into the hearts of men, a spirit which manifests itself in helpfulness and mercy and service.

A Prophecy and Its Fulfillment. Acts 11:27, 28. After Paul and Barnabas had been in Antioch about a year, certain men arrived from Jerusalem. These men were Christians and are called "prophets" in the New Testament passage which tells of their visit. They were probably preachers of Christianity who not only taught people about the religion which Jesus had established in the world but who also were able to forecast certain events. One of these prophets was named Agabus. He told the church in Antioch that a great famine was coming over all the world. The New Testament tells us that this famine came in the reign of the Roman emperor, Claudius, just as Agabus had said it would. A certain Jewish historian named Josephus also mentions a Judean famine which occurred at this time.

A New Spirit in the World. Acts 11:29, 30. When the Christians in Antioch heard that a great famine was coming, what did they do? Did they say, "Here is a chance to make a lot of money"? Did they plan to buy up food and store it away for the high prices which were sure to come with the famine? We are glad that these questions can be answered in the negative. The Antioch Christians did not even think first of their own comfort and safety. They thought first of their brethren in Judea.

They knew that the Christians in Judea would be sure to suffer first when the famine came and that prosperous churches like that at Antioch must send help promptly if the brethren in Judea were to escape disaster. Judea is not a rich country. Its soil is for the most part rocky and sterile. Great numbers of peoples there have always been poverty-stricken and constantly near the verge of distressing want. A famine in Judea threatened many people with suffering and starvation, while a famine in more prosperous Antioch meant in all likelihood nothing more serious than curtailed luxuries.

Planning to Send Relief. So the Christians of Antioch "determined to send relief unto the brethren that dwelt in Judæa." They went about the undertaking systematically. They decided that all should give something toward the undertaking. Each was to give "according to his ability," that is, as much as it seemed possible for him to give. It was to be a freewill offering, but it turned out to be an offering in which all shared, for there does not seem to have been even one Christian who did not give something. The account says that "every man" determined to give, and to give as much as he could.

Having gathered what must have been a large sum of money, the Antioch Christians continued their effort at famine relief in an orderly way. They looked around for responsible people to carry the gift to Jerusalem. We are not surprised to learn that they chose their two great leaders, Paul and Barnabas. They evidently realized that it was a matter of much importance to have the offering placed in the hands of the proper persons in Jerusalem, so they commissioned Paul and Barnabas to turn it over to the elders of the church in Jerusalem to be distributed by these officials in such a manner as they and the Jerusalem church might decide to be best. The first great philanthropic undertaking the world had ever witnessed was thus begun by the Christians of Antioch over whom Paul and Barnabas had been pastors for about a year. Paul's preaching of a universal brotherhood in which there was neither Jew nor Greek was beginning to bear fruit. The influence of the more quiet Barnabas was behind the movement, too. The Antioch Christians

were simply doing what their teacher Barnabas had done some years before when on becoming a Christian he sold his land and laid the price at the disciples' feet.

In Jerusalem on a Mission of Mercy. Paul thus entered on a mission of mercy the city in which his life had been sought, and from which he had withdrawn because his life was in peril and his enemies so bitter that he could accomplish hardly anything. Paul had a quick temper, but he acquired the Christian grace of ready forgiveness when he became a follower of Jesus. He had no bitterness in his heart because he had been wronged in Jerusalem. He still loved the holy city of his forefathers and he loved the Christian brethren who dwelt there. He was willing to forgive those who had wronged him and manifested no desire to "get even" with those who persisted in being his enemies.

Paul's visit to Jerusalem on this occasion must have been brief. He does not mention it in his letter to the Galatians when speaking of the various times when he visited the city. He evidently entered the city quietly and left it again almost immediately. Such a course would have been wise. The Christians were enjoying peace and if Paul's presence in the city had become known to his enemies, the persecutions might have broken out again and all the Christians suffered. The account in The Acts indicates that the visit was brief and hasty. Paul and Barnabas were commissioned to deliver the offering into the hands of the elders. They were not to remain in Jerusalem in order to assist in the distribution of the offering.

A New Recruit for the Missionary Enterprise. Acts 12:25. Paul was now in need of helpers. The great work in Antioch was taxing his strength and the strength of his colaborer Barnabas. Paul may have had plans for more far-reaching efforts than he had yet undertaken and thus he may have been watching out for suitable helpers in the larger labors which he felt to be near. At all events while in Jerusalem he came across a young man named John Mark and he persuaded this youth to accompany him and Barnabas to Antioch. John Mark was probably little more than a boy when he became the companion of

Paul and Barnabas. Paul had a kindly and fatherly feeling for boys. He chose several as his helpers during his career as a missionary and he trained them so that they were able gradually to take over the great work he had begun and to carry it on after he was gone.

Who Was John Mark? The young man whom Paul brought back with him from Jerusalem became one of the great men of the early Church. He wrote that brief account of the life of Christ which we call "The Gospel According to Mark." He was Paul's traveling companion on the first missionary journey which he undertook from Antioch; after that he was a companion and helper of Barnabas in missionary work in the island of Cyprus. Toward the close of Paul's life, Mark was with him again, and he was probably beside his great leader until the time of Paul's death.

Mark's mother owned a house in Jerusalem. She was one of the early Christians for she made her house a meeting place for the followers of Jesus immediately after the resurrection of Jesus. She had probably heard Jesus in the days when he was preaching and teaching throughout Judea and Galilee and had become a believer in him.

Mark may have known Jesus, too, though he was only a boy at the time when Jesus was preaching and teaching. It may be that he was one of the band of boys and girls who welcomed Jesus to Jerusalem at the time of the triumphal entry and who kept on shouting, "Hosanna to the son of David," long after the older people had become silent.

In his Gospel narrative Mark gives an interesting account of a youth who followed the crowd which had seized Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane. Many New Testament scholars believe that this youth was Mark himself. Mark tells how this youth came so close to the armed band who had seized Jesus that some of the soldiers or officers laid hold on him. The youth was able to escape only by the most dexterous and prompt action. He had evidently been roused from sleep by the report that Jesus was about to be seized, for he was clad only in a large outer garment like a cloak, which he had evi-

dently thrown hastily about him as he rushed out into the night to find Jesus and to do what he could to save him from the mob which the Jewish leaders had gathered from the night crowd of the great city. Coming into the Garden he found that Jesus was being led away to the high priest's palace and that all the disciples had fled. Drawing near to the company which was leading Jesus away he either made himself known as a follower of Jesus or was recognized as such by some one in the crowd. Having been seized, he escaped by slipping out of the garment in which he was clad. Leaving it in the hands of his would-be captors, he fled away naked.

Paul evidently found this youth, now grown to be a young man, when he was paying the quiet visit to Jerusalem which has just been described. Mark was a cousin of Barnabas and it was quite natural that Paul should meet him in Jerusalem. Recognizing him as a young man of courage and promise, Paul invited him to come to Antioch as his helper. Bidding his mother and his friends good-by, John Mark left home to face the opportunities and labors of a promising career.

The Lesson Prayer

We ask thee, our Father in heaven, to give us an understanding of the spiritual truths which are illustrated in the lesson we have been studying. Show us how to work with one another under thy guidance, that by coöperation we may build up thy Kingdom in the world. Give us that sense of universal brotherhood and that spirit of helpfulness which was manifested by the Christians of Antioch. Help us to show a real Christian spirit toward our relatives at home, toward our schoolmates, and toward strangers whom we may meet. Give us the spirit of true courtesy which is built on the Golden Rule. Forgive us for being carelessly unkind. We ask in the name of Jesus. Amen.

Supplemental Missionary Story

"The Adventurous Ship." "The Book of Missionary Heroes," page 65.

EXPRESSIONAL SESSION

THE PLACE OF COÖPERATION IN A GREAT AND USEFUL LIFE

I Cor. 12:12-31; ch. 13

Our Scripture lesson is an earnest plea for Christian coöperation. Paul had heard that the members of the Christian church in Corinth were not coöperating as they should. He gave a striking illustration of the need for coöperation between Christians. He said that all who have become followers of Jesus have become so closely related to one another and to Jesus that they are like parts of one body. He showed how the different parts of the body help one another: the eye helps the ear; the hand helps the foot. If one member of the body suffers, the other members suffer with it. "The eye cannot say to the hand, I have no need of thee: or again the head to the feet, I have no need of you."

Paul told the Corinthians that in becoming followers of Jesus they have become members of the body of Christ and, therefore, members one of another. He explained how God has assigned different members of the Church to different tasks and given various gifts to his children so that they may be helpers to one another and make the Church strong through a division of labor and a constant coöperation.

Paul realized that Christian love was the great essential for Christian coöperation and his discussion of the matter reached a climax in that masterpiece of truth and eloquence which is recorded in the thirteenth chapter of First Corinthians. The real cause of the dissensions in Corinth was a lack of Christian love.

Some Truths from the Lessons We Have Been Studying

Hearty coöperation between the members of the church in Antioch made that church great and strong.

Paul and Barnabas did a great work as they labored together in Antioch because they knew how to get along well with each other and with the members of the church.

When the church of Antioch sent relief to Judea it was putting into practice what Jesus had taught concerning coöperation.

Coöperation is one of the greatest agencies for establishing God's Kingdom in the world.

The missionary enterprise is essentially only brotherly coöperation on a world-wide basis.

Review Questions

1. Tell what you can of the city of Antioch.
2. Why did Paul and Barnabas make a specially strong team for Christian work?
3. Tell of the progress of the Antioch church under the leadership of Paul and Barnabas.
4. How did the followers of Jesus come to be called Christians?
5. Explain the parable of the Leaven.
6. What philanthropic enterprise was undertaken by the church in Antioch?
7. Show that philanthropy of a world-wide kind owes its existence to the teaching of Jesus.
8. Show that the famine relief work of the Antioch church was well planned.
9. What do we learn concerning the disposition of Paul from the events described in this lesson?
10. Tell what you can of the career of John Mark.

Bible Verses

Ecc. 4:9-12; Lam. 3:27; Matt. 11:29, 30; 18:20; 25:24-30; Luke 14:25-35; Rom. 8:28; II Cor. 1:11; Gal. 6:1-5; James 5:16.

Study Topics

1. People with Whom Paul Coöperated. I. Silas.
2. People with Whom Paul Coöperated. II. Timothy.
3. Women with Whom Paul Labored. Phœbe. Rom. 16:1, 2.
4. The Importance of Coöperation in Such Athletic Sports as Football.
5. The Need for Coöperation in the Work of the Church. (For the pastor.)

6. Coöperation in the Natural World. (Relation of bees and butterflies to flowers, and so forth, for some pupil who is specially interested in the subject or for some older person.)
7. Some of Paul's Words Concerning Coöperation. Phil. 4:2, 3; I Cor. 1:10-13.
8. Coöperation in the Army. (For some ex-service man.)
9. Is Coöperation Always Possible or Desirable? II Cor. 6:14-18.
10. Ways in Which Our Class Can Coöperate with Other Classes of the Church School.

The Lesson Truth Expressed in a Law

The Law of Coöperation. Much more can be accomplished when people work together in any worthy undertaking than when they all work independently of one another. Therefore:

1. We will try to coöperate with our parents and other relatives in an effort to make our homes truly Christian.
2. We will try to coöperate with our day-school teachers so that our school may be orderly, efficient, and happy.
3. We will try to coöperate with the teachers and officers of the church school so that religious instruction may be orderly, reverent, and effective.

Projects for Putting the Lesson Truths Into Practice

This lesson will be the teacher's opportunity to emphasize the need of coöperation in carrying out the plans which have been adopted and begun. It may be possible and desirable to have the class undertake some such matter as the putting on of a public entertainment for the adults of the church. If other classes of the school are asked to coöperate in the undertaking, it will be more valuable than will be the case if the Intermediates do the work alone.

Rome
Three Taverns
Appii Forum
ITALY
Puteoli
Rhegium
SICILY
Syracuse
MELITA
ADRIA
THRACIA
BLACK SEA
Amphipolis
Apollonia
Philippi
Neapolis
Thessalonica
Berea
MACEDONIA
AEGEAN SEA
Troas
Assos
MITYLENE
ASIA
MYSIA
BITHYNIA
PHRYGIA
GALATIA
Antioch
Iconium
Lystra
Derbe
Tarsus
ACHAIA
CHIOS
Ephesus
Corinth
Cenchreae
Athens
PATMOS
Miletus
Colossæ
PISIDIA
CILICIA
Perga
PAMPHYLIA
Seleucia
Antioch
Patara
Attalia
COS
CNIDUS
RHODES
Myra
SYRIA
PHŒNICIA
Salamis
CYPRUS
Damascus
CRETE
Salmone
Phœnix
CAUDA
Fair Havens
Paphos
Sidon
Tyre
MEDITERRANEAN SEA
Ptolemais
Cæsarea
Antipatris
Jerusalem
PEREA
GALILEE
JUDEA
SYRTIS
Alexandria
EGYPT

CHAPTER VIII

LAUNCHING OUT ON A GREAT ADVENTURE

WEEK DAY SESSION

AN EVANGELISTIC TOUR THROUGH THE ISLAND OF CYPRUS

Acts 13:1-13

The church in Antioch had now grown to be so large that it had many prophets and teachers besides Paul and Barnabas. Several of these leaders are named in the chapter chosen as the basis of this lesson. Some of these leaders of the Antioch church were members of distinguished families. One was a foster brother of Herod the tetrarch. In this lesson we are to learn how the first great missionary undertaking of the Christian Church was set in motion by these prophets and teachers of the church in Antioch.

The Holy Spirit's Call to Paul and Barnabas. Acts 13:13. The prophets and teachers of the church in Antioch as they ministered to the people and worshiped God with prayer and fasting were told by the Holy Spirit to set apart Paul and Barnabas for a special work to which God had appointed them. These prophets and teachers may have been longing for the time when some of their number could launch out in some great undertaking for the spread of the religion of Jesus over the world. God usually calls people to great undertakings only after the people chosen for the work have become deeply interested in it and have longed and prayed for the opportunity which he gives to them. We have seen how Paul had long cherished the hope that he might do a great work among the Gentiles. We have seen how great an interest the church of Antioch took in winning Gentiles to Christianity. So we may believe that when God's Spirit revealed to the prophets and teachers of the Antioch church the fact that the time had come for a greater

missionary undertaking than they had yet carried on, the revelation was glad news to them.

The First Foreign Missionaries Ordained. Paul and Barnabas were set apart by what must have been an impressive religious service to the missionary work which God assigned them. The prophets and teachers of the church prepared for this service by fasting. It is probable that the service was public and the whole church assembled for this important event. Having offered prayer, the prophets and teachers of the church laid their hands upon Paul's head and upon the head of Barnabas thus commending them to God's care and dedicating them to the sublime task of preaching Christ in distant lands.

There may have been some farewell gathering at which the people of the church bade Paul and Barnabas good-by. Some such formal parting would seem to be implied in the phrase, "They sent them away." Paul and Barnabas probably talked over their plans together, but they were also praying continually to God for guidance and did not know just where and how far he would lead them. They came down to the coast and having come to the city of Seleucia they went on board a ship which was ready to sail for an island lying in the northeastern part of the Mediterranean Sea.

The Island of Cyprus. The island to which Paul and Barnabas sailed is called Cyprus. It lies some forty miles from the coast of Cilicia. The name Cyprus is from a Greek word which means copper. It was given to the island by the Greeks at an early date because there were rich copper mines in the mountains of the island. Cyprus was the birthplace of Barnabas, so the two missionaries and their companions were beginning their work in a region where Barnabas, at least, had a good many acquaintances. The Christian religion had reached Cyprus some years before Paul and Barnabas landed there. During the persecutions which followed the death of Stephen, some of the Christians of Jerusalem fled to Cyprus, possibly because there were already other Christians there in whose homes the refugees found safety. Christians from the island had taken part in the preach-

ing in Antioch which led to the rapid development of the church which was in that city. So the missionaries were not beginning their work in a country where Christianity was wholly unknown. They were, however, entering upon the first organized evangelizing campaign ever carried on there so far as we know.

The Gospel Proclaimed Throughout the Island. Acts 13:4-12. Landing at Salamis on the eastern side of the island, Paul and his companions began their work by entering the Jewish synagogues and preaching there that Jesus is the Messiah whom the Jews had so long expected. This became Paul's established custom. Whenever he entered a city he began his work there by preaching in the synagogue if there was a synagogue in the place. He evidently wished to be perfectly fair to his fellow countrymen. He wished to give them the first chance to accept Jesus as the Messiah. Usually he was excluded from the synagogue within a short time. When this occurred, he would go to the Gentiles.

So far as we are told, Paul and his companions were not excluded from any of the synagogues in Cyprus. It may be that they did not stay long enough in any one place to allow the opposition to them to develop to the point where the synagogues would be closed against them. The journey through the island seems to have been rapid. It was evidently the intention of Paul and Barnabas to reach as many places as possible with a brief proclamation of the gospel. Possibly they had plans for a second trip to the island for the purpose of organizing the work more thoroughly. They passed through the entire length of the island, finally reaching Paphos on the west coast.

The Governor of the Island Converted. We are not told much concerning the success of the missionary journey through Cyprus. One notable conversion, however, is recorded with some detail. Cyprus was at that time governed by a Roman official called a proconsul. The name of this proconsul, or governor, was Sergius Paulus. He lived in Paphos, so that was probably the capital of the island. This governor was a man of learning and culture. He heard about Paul and Silas and

invited them to come to his residence and tell him about the new faith which they were preaching. Sergius Paulus may have been a believer in the God of the Jews, for he had with him a certain Jew who bore the name of Elymas and who was considered to be a very wise man. Elymas was really an impostor, but he was evidently so cunning that the Roman governor had not yet detected his true character.

When Elymas learned that Paul and Barnabas were telling the governor about Jesus and the new religion which Jesus had taught, he became jealous. He feared that these newcomers would displace him in the esteem and favor of the governor. So Elymas began to dispute what Paul and Barnabas said. He tried to persuade the governor that the things the missionaries taught were untrue. Paul was not a man to be easily defeated in such a conflict as Elymas had seen fit to begin. We are told that Paul "fastened his eyes on him, and said, O full of all guile and all villany, thou son of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord? And now, behold, the hand of the Lord is upon thee, and thou shalt be blind, not seeing the sun for a season." Hearing this stern denunciation, Elymas was, indeed, stricken with a partial blindness and he went about seeking some one to lead him by the hand. Astonished at this exhibition of mysterious power, Sergius Paulus believed the message of Paul and Barnabas and proclaimed himself a Christian.

John Mark Goes Back to Jerusalem. Acts 13:13. At Paphos, Paul and his companions again took ship. Sailing northwestward they came to the city of Perga on the coast of Pamphylia. Here John Mark left his companions and returned to Jerusalem. We are not told why John Mark went back to his home. We know, however, that Paul did not approve of his doing so, for a little later he showed that he had made up his mind not to take John Mark on another such undertaking. Evidently Paul did not give his consent to any such action on John Mark's part. Possibly he had no idea that John Mark had any such notion and was surprised when he found the young man gone.

The fact that John Mark did not simply return to Antioch and resume his work in the church there, but went all the way back to Jerusalem, would seem to indicate that he had resolved not only to cut short the missionary journey which he had begun, but was minded to sever entirely his connection with Paul and Barnabas. John was young and had in all probability never been long away from home. It may be that he was just homesick. It is also possible that he was dismayed at the new venture upon which the company was entering. Paul was planning to cross the mountains which lie north of Perga that he might penetrate to the regions lying beyond. Thus far the missionaries had labored in a land where Barnabas, at least, was acquainted and where there were some Christian people. Now they were going into a little-known region where the gospel had never been preached. The mountain passes back of Perga were full of robber bands and the missionaries were facing real danger in trying to reach the region which lay beyond them.

It may be that motives even less worthy than those we have mentioned prompted John Mark to give up the undertaking. He may have felt that Paul was taking the leadership too much upon himself and slighting Barnabas. It may be that he was not in sympathy with Paul's policy of preaching the gospel to the Gentiles in the same way that he preached it to Jews. At all events, Mark went back home, but Paul and Barnabas set their faces toward the lands beyond the mountains.

Suggestions for Notebook Work

Mark out on the notebook maps the route of the missionary party from Antioch to Seleucia, across the sea to Salamis, through the island of Cyprus to Paphos, and over the sea to Perga. Have some pupil write a letter such as Barnabas would have written to John Mark after the latter had returned to Jerusalem. Have some other pupil write a letter such as John Mark might have written to his mother from Perga just before he started home. Picture: Elymas Struck with Blindness, No. 461.

SUNDAY SESSION

PENETRATING INTO THE INTERIOR OF ASIA MINOR

Acts 13:14-52; Gal. 4:13-15

Apparently Paul and Barnabas did not stop long in Perga. It may be that they did not preach there at all on their outward journey since we shall see that they paused there on their homeward journey and preached for a while. Perga had an unhealthful climate and malarial fever raged there in the summer season. This may be the reason why the missionaries hastened on across the mountains to other fields.

Preaching Christ in Antioch of Pisidia. Acts 13:14-41. The first city which the missionaries reached after crossing the mountains north of Perga bore the same name as the city from which Paul and Barnabas had begun their journey. To distinguish it from the Antioch which was in Syria, the city to which the missionaries had now come was called "Antioch of Pisidia" because it was located near a province known by that name. It was on the royal Roman road built by the emperor, Augustus Cæsar, and was a city of importance. The missionaries had now come into a region where the Christian religion was entirely unknown, though there were a good many Jews dwelling in the cities scattered over that section just as there were Jews almost everywhere within the limits of the Roman Empire.

Paul Suffers from Some Severe Physical Affliction. Gal. 4:13-15. Paul was suffering from some bodily ailment when he reached Antioch of Pisidia. We do not know just what the trouble was, but in writing to the churches of Galatia some years later Paul mentioned the fact that he preached the gospel there "because of an infirmity of the flesh." The church in Antioch is now believed by many New Testament scholars to be one of the churches of Galatia to which Paul wrote. It would seem from Paul's words in his letter that he had either fled to Antioch because he was ill and the climate of Perga was unfavorable to a recovery or that he had intended to hasten on through Antioch but stopped there because he was not in fit physical condition to go farther.

We may have some hint as to the nature of his affliction in the words which Paul wrote to the Galatian Christians. He gratefully recalled how these people did not despise him or reject him because of his physical condition. He remarked that instead of rejecting him they received him as an angel of God. Moreover, he wrote, "I bear you witness, that, if possible, ye would have plucked out your eyes and given them to me." Many Bible students believe, from this remark of Paul, that when he entered Antioch he was suffering from some trouble with his eyes. An eye disease known as ophthalmia is very common in the Orient and it sometimes fearfully disfigures the face of the person afflicted.

Paul and Barnabas Seek the Synagogue on the Sabbath Day. Paul's physical affliction did not prevent his going to the synagogue the first Sabbath he was in Antioch. Total strangers to everyone, the two missionaries entered the place of worship and sat down with the congregation there assembled. After the reading of the Law and the other parts of the service were over, the rulers of the synagogue very courteously turned to their visitors and said, "Brethren, if ye have any word of exhortation for the people, say on." This was a courtesy customarily shown to visitors who happened to be in the synagogue service. It may be that the rulers of the synagogue suspected that Paul and Barnabas were wandering rabbis. Their general appearance may have suggested as much.

Paul Preaches Christ in the Synagogue. Having received this invitation, Paul stood up and, beckoning with his hand, he caught the attention of the congregation at once. We have a brief report of his sermon and know that it must have been a powerful setting forth of Jesus as the expected Messiah and the Saviour of the world. He reviewed God's dealings with the children of Israel, showing how they had been delivered out of the bondage of Egypt and led through the perils of the wilderness. He recounted how God had given the Israelites a king in answer to their wishes and how he had raised up David to be their great ruler. From this point Paul began to explain how God had fulfilled his promises made to David. He told of the preaching of John the Baptist and

his testimony concerning the One who should come after him. Then he told of Jesus who had come just as John had foretold, but who had been rejected by the Jewish leaders in Jerusalem. He told of the arrest of Jesus, of his trial before Pilate, of his crucifixion, and of his burial. Then he proclaimed to them the resurrection. He told them that Jesus had been seen alive many days by his followers. He showed how the resurrection of Jesus was a fulfillment of prophecy. Paul closed his sermon with an invitation to all his hearers to accept Jesus as the Messiah and to find forgiveness through him as Saviour. "Be it known unto you therefore, brethren, that through this man is proclaimed unto you remission of sins: and by him every one that believeth is justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses."

Effects of the Sermon. Acts 13:42-44. This brief outline of Paul's sermon shows us that he was a great preacher. It is well worth our study because it is probably a good illustration of the kind of preaching Paul did wherever he went. We need not be surprised to find that the sermon produced a profound impression. Many of the people who had heard the sermon came to Paul saying that they hoped the same words "might be spoken to them the next sabbath." When the service broke up,

many people came about Paul and Barnabas, telling them that they believed that Jesus was, indeed, the Messiah. Among these confessors were both Jews and proselytes, that is, Gentiles who had accepted the religion of the Jews. During the week news of this wonderful sermon spread far and wide. Paul and Barnabas were doubtless busy throughout the week teaching and visiting and proclaiming the gospel wherever they were. So the next Sabbath a vast multitude gathered at the synagogue. Luke says, "Almost the whole city was gathered together to hear the word of God."

Opposition Born of Jealousy. Acts 13:45-48. A splendid start had been made toward the conversion of the whole city to Christianity, but opposition soon arose to hinder the progress of the revival. It often happens that when much good is being accomplished, evil forthwith appears to oppose the good. It was thus in Antioch. The opposition was born in that deplorably mean feeling which we call jealousy. The leaders of the synagogue saw the multitudes which came to hear Paul preach. They saw many coming to Paul and Barnabas and telling them that they believed what they said and that they hoped they would keep on teaching and preaching these same things. The leaders of the synagogue began to wonder what effect these remarkable events were going to have on them. For years they had taught in the synagogue and no such crowds had come to hear them speak. They began to dislike Paul and Barnabas without any cause except the mean jealousy which was in their own hearts. They began to find fault with them and to deny publicly the things which Paul and Barnabas taught. Luke says that they blasphemed. He probably means that they denied that Jesus is the Messiah and the Saviour of the world. So dreadful a thing is jealousy that it can blind the eyes so that they cannot see the beauty in the life and character of Jesus. It can stop the ears so that they cannot hear the truth as it is proclaimed in the teachings of Jesus.

Paul and Barnabas Turn to the Gentiles. The opposition of the Jewish leaders soon made it impossible for Paul and Barnabas to speak any longer in the synagogue.

They faced their opponents courageously and told them the plain truth. They told them that it was necessary that the word of God should first be spoken to them for they were the chosen people, but that since the Jews had rejected it and shown themselves unworthy of eternal life, they would now turn to the Gentiles. Paul and Barnabas were able to quote Old Testament passages which proved these statements. When the Gentiles heard that Paul and Barnabas proposed to keep right on preaching to them even though the Jews had closed the synagogue against them, they were glad.

Cast Out of the City. Acts 13:49-52. So Paul and Barnabas continued to preach to the Gentiles, and with effect, for we are told that "the word of the Lord was spread abroad throughout all the region." The Jews now had no reasonable cause for complaint, since Paul and Barnabas were not preaching to any of the members of the synagogue, but only to the Gentiles. Jealousy is never reasonable, however, and the Jewish leaders were determined to put a stop to the whole movement. They had influence with certain prominent women in the city and with the city officials. They used this influence to arouse prejudice against the missionaries. They doubtless persuaded the city officials that Paul and Barnabas were trouble makers from distant lands and that it would be a good thing to drive them away. So the missionaries were seized and taken outside the city limits and told to depart. There was no use wasting further time and running risks of being killed in Antioch when other fruitful fields were awaiting them, so the missionaries left Antioch. We are told that "they shook off the dust of their feet against them, and came unto Iconium." They were not discouraged. They were happy because they had accomplished a great deal in Antioch. They believed they had sown seed which would in due time bear an abundant harvest.

The Lesson Prayer

We thank thee, our Father in heaven, for the heroic venturesomeness of thy servants, the missionaries of past centuries, who planted the Christian faith in pagan lands. Teach us to be courageous in the service of the right.

Help us to be true to our faith in all places and at all times. Forgive us if we have ever acted as though we were ashamed of the name of Jesus. We ask in his name. Amen.

SUPPLEMENTAL MISSIONARY STORY

"The Boy of the Adventurous Heart." "The Book of Missionary Heroes," page 113.

EXPRESSIONAL SESSION

THE PLACE OF HEROIC VENTURESOMENESS IN A GREAT AND USEFUL LIFE

Mark 10:17-22

In our Scripture lesson we catch a glimpse of a young man of most excellent character who might have become a disciple of Jesus, but who did not because he lacked that spirit of noble venturesomeness which is willing to risk all for a great cause. This young man came to Jesus in all sincerity. His question was not a cunningly devised trap intended to catch Jesus in some utterance which might become a ground for a charge of heresy. He was not like the scribes and Pharisees who were blinded by prejudice and filled with jealousy. He was honestly seeking for a higher way of life. But when Jesus pointed out the pathway to higher things, he hesitated. The way that Jesus indicated meant the loss of property, for Jesus said, "Go, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor." Perhaps it was not merely the love of property that caused the young man to go away sorrowful. It may have been rather the dread of the unknown circumstances which faced him in a kind of life such as he had never known. He had been reared in luxury. He had never known anything else. To enter courageously into a kind of living where he owned no property required a heroic venturesomeness beyond that which he could muster. To cut loose from that which is tried and familiar and launch out into the unknown calls for a high type of courage. It requires the kind of courage David Livingstone had when he plunged into the forests of Central Africa, severing his communications with the outside world. It requires the kind of

courage Moses had when he turned away from the palaces of Egypt to become the leader and champion of a nation of slaves in their struggle for freedom.

Some Truths from the Lessons We Have Been Studying

The church at Antioch had a spirit of noble venturesomeness. It was willing to send out its leaders to other lands that the gospel might be preached among those who had never heard of Jesus.

It may be that Mark's spirit of venturesomeness failed as a result of the hardships he encountered and because of the prospects of greater dangers ahead. Noble venturesomeness must be persevering. It is something more than a sudden burst of enthusiasm which dies down as quickly as it rises.

The truly courageous Christian will not stir up trouble unnecessarily; neither will he allow the cause of Christ to suffer rather than arouse opposition and strife. Paul did not wish to cause trouble in the synagogue at Antioch of Pisidia, but it was a choice between arousing the opposition of the Jewish leaders and keeping quiet about Jesus as the Messiah and Saviour. Paul was venturesome enough to awaken bitter opposition if it must come as a necessary result of preaching the whole gospel.

Review Questions

1. Name some of the teachers and prophets of the church in Antioch.
2. Tell of the ordaining of the first missionaries.
3. Where did the missionaries begin their work?
4. What results were attained in the first field where the missionaries labored? See Acts 15:36.
5. Why do you think John Mark went back home?
6. Tell of the first meeting the missionaries attended in Antioch of Pisidia.
7. Why did some of the Jews oppose Paul and Barnabas?
8. What did Paul do after the synagogue was closed against him?

9. How did the sojourn in Antioch of Pisidia come to an end?

10. What events of Paul's life show that he was nobly venturesome?

Bible Verses

Ex. 3:10; Josh. 1:2; Ps. 91:1-7; Isa. 6:8; Jer. 1:6, 7; Matt. 4:18-22; 6:19-21; 28:19, 20; I Cor. 16:13; Heb. 11:8.

Study Topics

1. Abraham, a Man of Heroic Venturesomeness. Gen. 12:1-9.
2. The Adventurous Task of Moses.
3. Foreign Missions a Challenge to Heroic Venturesomeness.
4. The Pilgrims of Plymouth and Their Spirit of Heroic Venturesomeness.
5. God's Rewards for Those Who are Willing to Risk All for Him.
6. Esther Risks Her Life to Save Her Countrymen. Esth. 4:13-17.
7. The Venturesomeness of a Great Reformer. (Read about John Huss in some Church History.)
8. The Venturesomeness of a Great Arctic Explorer. (Read "The Friendly Arctic," by Stefansson.)
9. "A Message to Garcia." (See booklet with this title by Elbert Hubbard.)
10. The Difference Between Foolhardiness and Heroic Venturesomeness.

The Lesson Truth Expressed in a Law

The Law of Heroic Venturesomeness. Great men and women have followed God's leadership even when to do so involved great risks. Therefore:

1. We will try to find out what God would have us do, and when we are sure as to his work for us, we will not be turned away from the task he gives, even though fidelity to it may mean losses for ourselves.
2. We will try to think always of the establishment of God's Kingdom on earth as one of the goals which every individual ought to help the world to attain.

3. We will seek to cultivate that courage which is not afraid of ridicule or personal discomfort, but which undertakes great tasks for God and humanity.

Projects for Putting the Lesson Truths Into Practice

The teacher who goes into the out of doors with her class will have many opportunities to impress upon her pupils the difference between foolhardiness and heroic venturesomeness. The boys of the class will probably propose some such feat for themselves as walking along the top girders of a bridge high above the water. This will give an opportuunity to explain the nature of true courage. The teacher may be able to put renewed zeal into some project already under way by leading the pupils to look upon the undertaking as their adventure for the Church. In such a work as the partial support of a missionary among the Navajo Indians, the class would be entering a real adventure for the Kingdom of God. They would be putting their money and their time into the enterprise because they had faith in the Christian religion and in God. These are the elements of character which give heroic venturesomeness for great undertakings in maturer years.

CHAPTER IX

FURTHER WORK IN ASIA MINOR AND THE HOMEWARD JOURNEY

WEEK DAY SESSION

PUSHING ON INTO NEW FIELDS

Acts 14:1-20

When Paul and Barnabas were driven from Antioch, they struck out toward the southeast following the great Roman highway that led to a city called Iconium. The country over which they traveled is a vast and high table-land more than three thousand feet above the sea. It is waterless for the most part but the city of Iconium lies in a kind of oasis near the center of the region. It is some eighty miles from Antioch to Iconium and the missionaries probably walked the entire distance, stopping to tell the gospel story whenever they had the opportunity.

Great Success and Great Opposition in Iconium. Acts 14:1-7. When the missionaries reached Iconium, they did just as they had done in Antioch. They entered the synagogue of the Jews and when they were given an opportunity to speak they told the people about Jesus and the resurrection. The preaching of the gospel was even more successful in winning converts in Iconium than had been the case in Antioch. Luke says that "a great multitude both of Jews and of Greeks believed."

Opposition to the missionaries quickly developed. The Jewish leaders sought to turn the Gentiles against the missionaries. They were able to gain the support of the city officials just as the Jews of Antioch had done. The apostles kept right on with their preaching even though the synagogue was closed against them. They won so many disciples that the city was pretty equally divided between those who took the side of the Jews and those who took the side of the apostles.

PAUL AT LYSTRA

The whole city was thus thrown into a turmoil. The Jews persuaded the city officials that the apostles were trouble makers, telling them that everything had been peaceful in the city before these wandering teachers of a false religion made their appearance in Iconium. Paul and Barnabas were in constant danger of mob violence as they went about their work. The apostles finally learned of a conspiracy to seize them and stone them to death. Both Jews and Gentiles were in the plot and they had the backing of the city officers. We may be sure that neither Paul nor Barnabas would have fled if they had believed that God wished them to stay longer in Iconium. They would have trusted in God to protect them or would have laid down their lives then and there for the religion of Jesus. But things were now in such an uproar that there seemed to be little opportunity to do more in Iconium for the present. So Paul and Barnabas fled from the city.

Turning to the southwest the missionaries made a journey of eighteen miles to Lystra. Since there is no mention of a synagogue in Lystra, we may believe that there were few Jews in the city. Perhaps there were none at all. For the first time, then, the missionaries were entering among a purely pagan people to begin an evangelistic campaign.

Taken for Gods in Lystra. Acts 14:8-18. When Paul and Barnabas came into Lystra, they began to preach in the street. Among the crowd that gathered around was a poor crippled man who had crawled up to hear what these strangers were saying. He had been a cripple from his birth and had never walked in his life. Paul watched the face of this cripple as he told of Jesus and the miracles of healing which Jesus had wrought in Palestine. When he saw by the face of the cripple that this one man at least believed the message concerning Jesus, Paul said to him in a loud voice, "Stand upright on thy feet." When the multitudes saw that the man had indeed risen to his feet and could walk, they were so amazed that they said among themselves, "The gods are come down to us in the likeness of men." They called Barnabas Jupiter, and Paul they called Mercury. These two of the gods

they worshiped they believed had now appeared as men among them.

Summoning their priest from the temple of Jupiter, the people prepared to offer sacrifices to Paul and Barnabas. They brought oxen and garlands of flowers and were getting ready to offer the sacrifices, but when Paul and Barnabas heard what was going on, they ran among the people crying out: "Sirs, why do ye these things? We also are men of like passions with you, and bring you good tidings, that ye should turn from these vain things unto a living God, who made the heaven and the earth and the sea, and all that in them is: who in the generations gone by suffered all the nations to walk in their own ways. And yet he left not himself without witness, in that he did good and gave you from heaven rains and fruitful seasons, filling your hearts with food and gladness."

So great was the wonder of the multitudes at the healing of the lame man that they could hardly be persuaded that Paul and Barnabas were not gods. The missionaries had all they could do to keep the people from offering the sacrifices. If Paul had been given time he might have made the healing of the lame man a means of turning many of these pagans to the worship of the true God, but enemies were on his track and they appeared so quickly that Paul seems not to have had opportunity to pursue the matter to a successful issue.

Followed by Malignant Enemies. Acts 14:19, 20. Paul's enemies in Iconium had plotted to stone him, but, as we have seen, he escaped from them and went to Lystra. With persistent malignity the enemies of Paul followed him. They came to Lystra evidently very soon after Paul and Barnabas had reached that city. They succeeded in stirring up a spirit of mob violence among a certain portion of the people who dwelt in Lystra. So it came to pass that in just a little while Paul and Barnabas were being plotted against in the city where they had been taken for gods.

So successful were the enemies of Paul in turning the people of Lystra against the missionaries that the work not only was hindered but a mob actually attacked Paul and stoned him. Smitten down by the stones of the mob,

Paul was dragged outside the city and left lying there upon the ground. His enemies, supposing that they had succeeded in killing him, withdrew, and his few friends gathered about weeping over what they believed to be the dead body of their leader. However, as his friends gathered about him, Paul recovered consciousness. He was able to stand and later he entered the city. The next morning it was thought best for Paul to withdraw quietly from the city, so he went away with Barnabas and they came to Derbe.

A Household Conversion at Lystra. II Tim. 1:5. The work of the missionaries in Lystra seemed to have ended in disastrous failure, but no good effort is ever lost. In other parts of the New Testament we learn that it was in Lystra that Paul came first in contact with a lad who was to become one of his most intimate companions and most efficient helpers. Timothy was only a boy when Paul paid this first visit to Lystra, which was Timothy's home town. Paul came into the household of Timothy and succeeded in turning its inmates toward the Christian faith. Eunice, the mother of Timothy, and Lois, his grandmother, became Christians, and Timothy himself accepted Jesus as the Messiah, concerning whose coming his mother had taught him.

Branded with the Marks of Jesus. Gal. 6:17. Paul bore the scars of wounds received in Lystra until the day of his death. Years afterward he wrote to the churches of Galatia, one of which is believed to have been the church at that time existing in the city of Lystra. He says in this letter, "Henceforth let no man trouble me; for I bear branded on my body the marks of Jesus." Certain opponents were following Paul about from place to place. They had been visiting the churches of Galatia and had been trying to persuade the members of these churches that Paul was no true disciple of Jesus. Paul answered these opponents by pointing to his scars received at Lystra and elsewhere, and by saying, "Let no man trouble me; for I bear branded on my body the marks of Jesus." He had given evidence of his fidelity to Jesus by his unwavering devotion to the task of making the gospel known in all the earth.

A Successful Campaign in Derbe. From Lystra Paul and Barnabas turned southeast again and came to Derbe. Here for the first time Paul and Barnabas seem to have met with no opposition. No mention is made of a synagogue in Derbe and there were probably few Jews, if any, living in the city. Paul's malignant enemies of Iconium were evidently of the opinion that they had killed Paul at Lystra, so they gave him no trouble while he labored in Derbe.

The work of the missionaries in Derbe was very successful. Luke wrote that "many disciples" were made. As Paul had found in Lystra Timothy, who afterward became one of his chief helpers, so in Derbe he found a youth named Gaius who accepted Jesus as the Saviour. Gaius, like Timothy, became one of Paul's helpers. Both Gaius and Timothy were traveling companions of Paul on some of the subsequent trips which he made through Asia Minor.

Suggestions for Notebook Work

Trace on the notebook maps the journey of Paul and Barnabas from Perga to Antioch of Pisidia, to Iconium, to Lystra, to Derbe, back through all these towns to Perga, then to Attalia, thence by ship to Antioch in Syria. Construct a chronological chart of Paul's life giving approximate dates, so that it may be filled out as the story of Paul's life is studied further. Suggested outline down to the time of this chapter would be as follows:

Chronological Table of Paul's Life

Born in Tarsus about A. D. 2.
Boyhood in Tarsus, A. D. 2-17.
In School at Jerusalem, A. D. 17-22.
Teaching and Tent-Making in Tarsus, A. D. 22-31.
His Conversion, A. D. 32.
In Arabia, A. D. 32-35.
In Syria and Cilicia, A. D. 35-43.
Work in Antioch, A. D. 44.
First Missionary Journey from Antioch, A. D. 45-47.

Picture: Paul and Barnabas at Lystra, by Raphael, No 286.

SUNDAY SESSION

ORGANIZING CHURCHES ON THE HOMEWARD JOURNEY

Acts 14:21-28

Derbe proved to be the farthest point reached by Paul and Barnabas on this first missionary journey from Antioch of Syria. They had traveled several hundred miles and had probably been away from Antioch more than two years. So they began to think of turning homeward. In the latter part of their journey they had been working back toward Antioch of Syria and at Derbe they were not more than two hundred miles from that city on an air line. Their shortest route home was to cross Mount Taurus and journey around the northeastern corner of the Mediterranean Sea to Antioch. To return through the cities where they had been persecuted and where Paul had narrowly escaped being killed was an undertaking full of peril. It was, moreover, twice as far by this route as it would have been over the Taurus Mountains. However, the missionaries thought of the new converts in the cities they had visited. They knew that some of them were being persecuted for their faith in Jesus. So Paul and Barnabas determined to face the dangers and to return home by the route which they had traveled on their outward journey.

Back to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch. Acts 14:21. So the missionaries left Derbe and came again into Lystra where Paul had been stoned and left for dead. From Lystra they traversed again the eighteen miles of Roman highway connecting that city with Iconium. Iconium was the home of Paul's most malignant enemies, for it was they who had plotted the stoning in their own city and who having failed of an opportunity to carry out their plans there followed Paul to Derbe and took the lead in the attack which came so near ending Paul's life. We hear nothing of Paul's enemies during this homeward journey of the missionaries. It is likely that Paul came in quietly and soon departed so that none of his enemies suspected his presence in the city. It may be that they still thought that he was dead. From Iconium the mis-

sionaries traversed another eighty-mile section of the Roman road and again entered Antioch of Pisidia. This is the city from which Paul and Barnabas had been expelled by the city officials and it is probable that had their presence in the city become known, their lives would have paid the penalty.

Confirming the Souls of the Disciples. Acts 14:22. The homeward journey was not an evangelistic campaign. It had other ends in view. First of all, the missionaries wished to meet those who had become professed followers of Jesus. They wished to encourage them so that they would hold out against the persecutions which had arisen against them, for after Paul and Barnabas had gone on their way, the wrath of their enemies had been turned against the converts whom the missionaries left behind. So Paul and Barnabas met with these Christians in secret. They told them to continue steadfast in the faith and explained that it was through tribulation that we must enter the Kingdom of God.

Appointing Officers in Every Church. Acts 14:23. As the missionaries went from city to city and gathered the believers in Jesus together, they organized churches by appointing elders who should be the overseers and leaders of the various congregations. Paul knew the value of organization. He knew that unless the new converts had meetings and kept up their services of worship they would become scattered and the movement which had begun would be lost. Selecting the best men in the various cities they set them apart as elders or shepherds of their fellow Christians. Thus bound together by a faith which was dearer to them than life, the little bands of Christians met their great leaders in secret, under the cover of darkness, perhaps at the midnight hour, with watchers set lest their enemies should come upon them unawares. They prayed and fasted and worshiped together; then commending one another to God they parted. Paul and Barnabas to face the dangers of their homeward journey, the others to remain in their own communities and to cling to their faith whatever might come upon them.

Preaching the Gospel in Perga. Acts 14:24-26. Cross-

ing the mountains Paul and Barnabas descended to the low-lying coast and came once more to Perga, where they had landed on their outward journey after sailing across from Cyprus. They had not preached in Perga when they passed through it before, so now they paused for a season in the city and proclaimed the gospel. We are not told concerning the results of the preaching in Perga, but we may believe that they won converts there as elsewhere. A little later Paul spoke to Barnabas concerning the disciples who had been won in every city visited on this first missionary journey, so we may be sure that at least some converts to Christianity were gained in this lowland city by the sea.

For some reason the missionaries did not take ship from Perga for Antioch of Syria. They went a short distance westward along the coast to a town called Attalia and from there took ship for home. It may be that there was no ship due at Perga for some time and the missionaries heard of a ship about to set sail from this neighboring seaport.

Welcomed Home. Acts 14:27, 28. Having taken ship at Attalia, the missionaries sailed eastward along the southern coast of Asia Minor. They did not go back to Cyprus and retrace their steps over that part of their journey but sailed directly to Antioch of Syria. A sea voyage of something less than four hundred miles brought them to Seleucia and from thence they hastened on to Antioch. It must have been a joyous home-coming for all concerned. It was an occasion of joy to Paul and Barnabas for they had that feeling of satisfaction which comes after great labors faithfully performed. They had suffered persecutions and hardships, but the undertaking had been wonderfully successful. In every city where they had preached they had left behind them earnest disciples of Jesus. In most of these cities they had organized churches by appointing elders and other officers. It had been demonstrated that the Gentiles would turn eagerly to the Christian religion if it was presented to them in an earnest and brotherly way. Paul and Barnabas could say truthfully that they had fulfilled the work to which they had been commissioned by the church

in Antioch and to which they had been set apart by God.

When Paul and Barnabas came to Antioch, there was a great gathering of the church there. All were eager to hear of the experiences of their missionaries on the fifteen-hundred-mile journey through many lands and occupying many months. When the church members had gathered, Paul and Barnabas told of their experiences. They did not recount these things in any boastful manner. Luke says, "They rehearsed all things that God had done with them." They recognized that they had been only instruments which God had used to accomplish a great work.

That which gave most joy to the missionaries and to the church in Antioch was the fact that this missionary effort had demonstrated the fact that God "had opened a door of faith unto the Gentiles." The dreams which Paul had cherished through many years of toil and obscurity were now coming true. Jesus was fulfilling his promise, made to Paul in the hour of his conversion, when he said, "Arise, and stand upon thy feet: for to this end have I appeared unto thee, to appoint thee a minister and a witness both of the things wherein thou hast seen me, and of the things wherein I will appear unto thee; delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom I send thee, to open their eyes, that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive remission of sins and an inheritance among them that are sanctified by faith in me."

Rest After Labor. The missionaries had been away for a long time, possibly for nearly three years. They had traveled on foot. They had preached not only on the Sabbath, but also day after day in the streets and along the highways, wherever they could find people who would listen. They had been in grave danger from time to time. So we are not surprised to learn that Paul and Barnabas "tarried no little time with the disciples" in Antioch before launching out upon another missionary journey. They had earned a rest and it was necessary for them to recuperate their strength before undertaking another journey such as that which they had just accom-

plished. Indeed, before he began another missionary journey, Paul was called upon to grapple with a new and menacing danger which had arisen during his absence on the first missionary journey and which had grown, in a sense, out of his success in preaching Christ to the Gentiles. Up to this time Paul's opponents had been among the Jews, or occasionally among Gentiles. He was now to be opposed by people, who, like himself, were professed followers of Jesus. He was to enter one of the most important of the great controversies which from time to time have been waged within the folds of the Christian Church.

The Lesson Prayer

Our Father in heaven, we pray that thou wilt teach us to be diligent and faithful in every task which thou dost assign unto us. Help us to love hard work because it is one of the ways in which we can honor thee and serve thee. Show us how to be patient with those who do not think as we do and who sometimes hinder our plans. Save us from becoming bitter while we persevere in that which we believe to be thy will. Give to us that fundamental unselfishness which is necessary to a full devotion to thee and to thy Kingdom. Forgive us for having been thoughtless and lacking in diligence and wavering in our devotion. We ask in the name of Jesus, thy Son. Amen.

Supplemental Missionary Story

"The Canoe of Adventure." "The Book of Missionary Heroes," page 92.

EXPRESSIONAL SESSION

THE PLACE OF UNSELFISHNESS IN A GREAT AND USEFUL LIFE

Mark 10:23-31

Our Scripture lesson is Mark's report of a conversation which Jesus had with his disciples just after the rich young ruler had gone away sorrowful. This young man

had come to Jesus saying, "Good Teacher, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?" Jesus had told the young man to go and sell all that he had and give the proceeds to the poor, and then come and follow him. Because he had great possessions, the young man went away. Then Jesus turned to his disciples and talked to them about the necessity of being willing to give up everything for the sake of eternal life and for the good of the Kingdom.

Peter, just a little boastfully perhaps, said, "Lo, we have left all, and have followed thee." Then Jesus told the disciples something concerning the law of unselfishness. He told them that if anyone left "house, or brethren, or sisters, or mother, or father, or children, or lands," for his sake, and for the gospel's sake, he should receive in the present time "houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life."

The life of Paul is a good illustration of the truth which Jesus expressed in these words. Paul had given up everything mentioned in the words of Jesus. He had given up relatives, home, and property in order to become a disciple of Jesus. He had given them up with a wholly unselfish purpose, literally for Jesus' sake and the gospel's sake. Did he receive a hundredfold reward in this life? I think we shall find that he did. We shall find that in giving up one brother he gained hundreds of brethren; in giving up one sister for the gospel's sake he gained hundreds of sisters through the gospel. He gave up one house in Tarsus which was rightfully his as an inheritance, but through the gospel he won hundreds of friends whose love for him was so sincere that they gladly made their homes his home.

This law of unselfishness runs through all lives that are truly great and good. People who live such lives gladly give up all for some great and worthy cause to which they have consecrated themselves. They do not give up these things in order to receive the reward, or expecting any reward. Nevertheless, the reward comes and it is a hundredfold more valuable than the things which were given up.

Some Truths from the Lessons We Have Been Studying

Those who have lived great and useful lives have lost sight of selfish interests in their devotion to some great cause.

Through the unselfish devotion of great-souled people humanity makes progress.

Unselfishness is its own reward for it reacts upon the character of the person who practices it and lifts that personality to nobility and grandeur of soul.

Unselfishness will make a person more diligent than selfishness can possibly make him. Paul would not have labored as he did unless he had been unselfish. Therefore, the unselfish person accomplishes more than the person who works from selfish motives.

Review Questions

1. Tell of Paul's experience in Iconium.
2. Paul's enemies probably charged him with being a disturber of the peace. How would you answer this charge against Paul?
3. Why did Paul and Barnabas refuse to have sacrifices offered to them by the people of Lystra?
4. Who was chiefly to blame for the attack upon Paul in Lystra?
5. What two young men whom Paul met at this time afterward became his helpers?
6. Why was Paul allowed to preach unhindered in Derbe?
7. What do you learn about the character of Paul and Barnabas through the fact that they returned to Antioch of Syria through the cities where they had already preached?
8. What did the missionaries do on their return journey?
9. Tell of the reception given Paul and Barnabas in their home church.
10. What rewards did Paul and Barnabas receive for their labors on the journey of which we have been studying?

Bible Verses

Prov. 27:2; Isa. 60:17; Matt. 5:40-42; 10:8, 38, 39; Luke 6:38; John 8:29; II Cor. 8:9; Gal. 6:2; I Tim. 2:6, 7.

Study Topics

1. The Unselfish Life of Frances Willard. (Pupil should read life of Miss Willard and report briefly upon unselfish elements in her character.)
2. Saul, a Great King Spoiled by Selfishness and Jealousy.
3. Can Anyone Be Unselfish and Succeed in Business?
4. The Tragic End of a Selfish Life. Luke 16:19-31.
5. Some of the Things Paul Gave Up in Order to Become a Christian.
6. Some of Paul's Rewards.
7. What a Person Has to Give Up To-day in Order to Become a Christian.
8. Ways in Which Intermediate Pupils Can Act Unselfishly.
9. How Unselfishness Helps the Home Life.
10. How Unselfishness Reacts Upon Character. (For the pastor.)

The Lesson Truth Expressed in a Law

The Law of Unselfishness. Unselfishness is an element of character which makes its possessor a blessing to the world. Therefore:

1. We will try to do unselfish acts day by day.
2. We will try to be unselfish in our plans and in our preparations for the activities of manhood and womanhood.
3. We will take Jesus as our ideal of the unselfish life, remembering that he "pleased not himself," but lived for others.

Projects for Putting the Lesson Truths Into Practice

Plan a Self-Denial Week when the members of the class will do without something in order to save money for some good cause. Ask pupils to do some unselfish act and hand in unsigned reports which may be read and discussed later.

CHAPTER X

THE STRUGGLE FOR GENTILE FREEDOM

WEEK DAY SESSION

A NEW MENACE TO THE CAUSE OF CHRIST

Acts 15:1-5; Gal. 2:1-10

Paul was now fairly started on his great life task. He had carried the gospel of Jesus directly to the Gentiles and had accomplished much in the way of turning them "from darkness to light." He now saw clearly the sublime possibilities in the preaching of the religion of Jesus to those who had never known the God of the Jews, but who had been all their lives worshipers of idols. Paul was eagerly awaiting the time for another and more extensive journey among Gentile peoples when all his hopes were suddenly threatened by a new danger to the cause of Christ.

Growth of the Christian Church in Judea and Jerusalem. During the years that Paul and Barnabas were carrying on their labors in distant lands, the Christian Church had prospered in Jerusalem and in Judea. The churches in Judea were quite different from the church in Antioch of Syria. They were made up almost entirely of Jews. The few Gentiles who were members of the Christian churches in Judea had been Jewish proselytes before they became Christians; that is, they had become believers in Jehovah and had been accustomed to keep the Law of Moses as it had been interpreted by the rabbis.

So it came about quite naturally that the Christians of Judea insisted on this method as the way in which Gentiles were to become Christians. They required a Gentile to keep the Jewish fast days, to refrain from eating certain kinds of meat which had been pronounced unclean by the Law of Moses, and to submit themselves to a certain ceremonial rite called circumcision. Unless

a Gentile first did these things and showed that he was devoted to the old forms of the Jewish religion, the Judean churches would not permit such a Gentile to become a member of the Christian congregation.

Trying to Put New Wine Into Old Wine Skins and a New Patch on an Old Garment. Matt. 9:16, 17. Jesus had seen the possibility of just such a mistake as the Judean Christians were now making. He tried to make the people of his time see that the religion which he had come to establish was something more than a mere addition to the religion of the Old Testament. The new religion was to be built on the foundations laid by the Old Testament religion and was to emphasize some of the same truths that the Old Testament prophets had taught, but it was to be complete in itself. It had come to fulfill all that the Old Testament religion had promised. Jesus said that to try to fit the new religion into the forms and ceremonies of the old would be like putting new wine into old wine skins. The new wine would burst the old bags and both the wine and the skins would be wasted. He said that such an attempt would be like putting a new patch on an old garment; the new cloth would be unlike the old and in shrinking would tear the old cloth and make the rent worse than it was before.

The Church at Antioch Had Caught the True Meaning of Christianity. On the other hand the Christians of Antioch had come to understand the true nature of the Christian religion. They understood that it was not just a reformed Jewish religion, but a new religion grown out of the old, but independent of it and destined to replace it, and to spread all over the world. Consequently the church at Antioch had no such rules as the Judean churches concerning how Gentiles should become members of the Christian Church. They believed that faith in Jesus as the Son of God and the Saviour of the world was the one great thing that was necessary for anyone to become a Christian. They did not require, therefore, that Gentiles should keep the Jewish ceremonial law, or refrain from eating the kinds of meat which had been forbidden to the Jews in olden times.

The matter was one of great practical importance. If

the Judean Christians should force their customs upon all Christian churches, the result would be a very slow progress of Christianity among Gentile peoples. Very few Gentiles had accepted the Jewish religion. There were a few proselytes here and there, but most Gentiles despised the Jews and their religion. They called the Jews fanatics and their religion superstition. So if Christianity was to be presented to the Gentiles as just a different type of the Jewish religion, there was small hope of any large success for it.

Moreover, the Judean Christians were wrong in making something besides faith in Jesus necessary for admission to the Christian fellowship. If they had succeeded, the greatness of the work of Jesus would have been obscured and the power of the Christian religion would have suffered just as it always has suffered when the followers of Jesus have lost sight of their great Leader.

Certain Men from the Judean Churches Come to Antioch. Acts 15:1, 2. The Christians of Judea heard about what the Antioch church was doing; how they were receiving Gentiles on the same conditions that they received Jews, requiring of them only a confession of their faith in Jesus as Saviour and Lord. Perhaps these Judean Christians heard, too, of Paul's journey into far distant lands where he had preached to Gentiles and organized churches among them.

So certain men came down from Judea to Antioch to see if they could not correct what they believed to be a dangerous tendency in the church which was there. It may be that the churches of which these men were members in Judea had sent them on this mission, though we have reason to believe that the Jerusalem church had taken no such action. These men came into the church at Antioch and began to teach the people over whom Paul and Barnabas had so long had the leadership. They were very outspoken in their statements, telling the Antioch Christians that unless they kept the customs of Moses they could not be saved. Paul and Barnabas did not believe this and they said so. Paul and Barnabas taught that everyone who believed on Jesus would be saved, no matter whether he kept the customs of Moses or not.

As a result, there was a great deal of dissension and discussion between Paul and Barnabas on the one side and the men from Judea on the other. The Christians of Antioch who had come in as Gentiles without promising to keep the Jewish customs hardly knew what to believe. These opponents of Paul at a later time tried to persuade people that Paul was no true disciple of Jesus and they may have done something of the kind in Antioch on this occasion.

Paul Shows Himself to be a Worthy Antagonist. Gal. 2:1-5. These men from the Judean churches did not make much progress in their efforts to bring over Paul to their point of view. Paul had been trained for just that sort of argument which the coming of these men had forced upon him. If these men from Judea tried to persuade the Antioch Christians that Paul was no true follower of Jesus, we may be sure that Paul had something to say in reply. In speaking of these men in a letter which he wrote to the Galatian churches Paul called them "false brethren" and said that they "came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage." He further indicated his stout resistance to what he regarded as a false teaching, for he wrote of these men that he "gave place" to them, "in the way of subjection, no, not for an hour." Paul realized the importance of the matter under dispute and was determined that if he could prevent it the cause of Christ should not suffer from the narrow views of these men from Judea.

Referring the Question to the Apostles. As the controversy between Paul and the men from Judea continued, some members of the church in Antioch proposed that the whole matter be referred to the apostles and elders in Jerusalem for their decision. Peter and John were still in Jerusalem and James the brother of Jesus was also there. These apostles were naturally looked upon as leaders of the whole Christian Church. They had been with Jesus and would know what the Master would be apt to say regarding the matter which was causing so much trouble in the church at Antioch. So both sides agreed that this should be done. The Antioch

church arranged to send Paul and Barnabas and certain others of their members to Jerusalem. Of course the Judean churches likewise appointed certain persons to represent them and to maintain their side of the controversy in the council, which was now planned in the city of Jerusalem.

Paul Makes Ready for the Coming Conflict. Acts 15:3-5. Paul knew the danger which threatened the Church. He became intensely active. He knew better than to appear before the council unprepared. He knew that if the churches of countries lying along the borders of Judea knew of the great work already accomplished among the Gentiles, they would rejoice and would make their influence felt for a liberal policy toward the peoples who were not Jews or proselytes. So as Paul and Barnabas and the other representatives of the Antioch church passed through Phœnicia and Samaria, they told about the conversion of the Gentiles and there was great rejoicing in these churches. It may be that some of these churches of Phœnicia and Samaria were represented at the council. If so, we may be sure that these representatives were on Paul's side of the controversy and made their influence felt for the liberal policy which Paul advocated.

Paul did something else which greatly strengthened his prospects of success in the conference. When he reached Jerusalem, he went to the apostles and elders and told them about the great work which had been accomplished among the Gentiles in the distant regions which he and Barnabas had visited. He spoke to the Jerusalem church and won most of the members to his way of thinking. However, there were some members of the Jerusalem church who had been Pharisees before they became Christians. These former Pharisees refused to accept Paul's theory concerning the methods whereby Gentiles should enter the Christian Church. They maintained that Gentiles must be circumcised and must keep the Law of Moses if they wished to become Christians. These ex-Pharisees thus became Paul's opponents in the council which was held before the apostles and the elders of the Jerusalem church.

Suggestions for Notebook Work

Add to the Chronological Table of Paul's Life the following item: "Council of Jerusalem, A. D. 48." Picture: St. John and Peter, by Dürer, No. 763.

SUNDAY SESSION

THE COUNCIL OF JERUSALEM

Acts 15:6-35; Gal. 2:11-21

Paul's victory in the coming council had really been assured in his private conference with the apostles and elders of the Jerusalem church. The argument which won was the living evidence of the power of Jesus to change the Gentiles into Christians. Paul had with him a young man named Titus who was a Gentile of Antioch but who had become a Christian under Paul's preaching. The apostles and elders found this young Gentile Christian to be a person truly devout and zealous for the religion which he had made his own. When they heard about Paul's experiences in distant lands, and learned that there were hundreds of Gentile Christians who were like Titus and had never known anything about the customs taught by the rabbis, they were glad and they extended the right hand of fellowship to Paul and Barnabas. They saw that God had, indeed, called Paul to work among the Gentiles just as he had called them to work among the Jews.

Face to Face with the Judaizers. Acts 15:6. Not all the members of the church in Jerusalem were ready to extend the right hand of fellowship to Paul and Barnabas. There was a strong party, composed mainly of Christians who had been Pharisees, which was bitterly opposed to Paul and determined that the Gentiles should not be admitted into the Christian Church unless they kept the customs of the Jews. This party came to be called the "Judaizers" because they wished to make Christianity as much like the Jewish religion as they could.

These Judaizers were on hand when the council met

and they entered into the controversy determined to win their point and to discredit Paul. They were given opportunity to state their case fully. Then Paul and Barnabas were given a chance to explain what they had done among the Gentiles. After both sides had been heard, the case was discussed. Luke says that there was "much questioning" without any approach to an agreement.

Peter's Sensible View of the Matter. Acts 15:7-12. A turning point in the deliberations came when Peter arose and addressed the assembly. Peter had now grown old in the service of his Lord. For nearly twenty years he had preached boldly in the name of Jesus. He was beloved and respected by the whole Church, so the multitudes assembled to consider this grave matter gave him respectful attention. Peter told of that time when he had preached to the Roman centurion and other Gentiles. He said that at that time God had blessed these Gentiles just as he had blessed the Jews and that there had been no distinction in God's dealing with the two classes of believers. "Now therefore," said Peter, "why make ye trial of God, that ye should put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? But we believe that we shall be saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, in like manner as they." If there had been any uncertainty as to how the matter would go, it was cleared away by this noble statement of the grounds of salvation through the merits of Christ as they were set forth by the aged apostle of Jesus. A silence fell over the great assembly. Then Paul and Barnabas came forward and told of the wonderful results which had been attained by preaching Jesus to the Gentiles. After this there could be no decision adverse to the stand taken by Paul and Barnabas on the matter of Gentile freedom from the Jewish customs. The Judaizers had lost.

The Decision of James. Acts 15:13-21. James, the brother of Jesus, sat as the presiding officer of the council. After Paul and Barnabas had spoken, James arose and gave his decision. He reminded the assembly of Peter's experiences, wherein Gentiles were converted and became Christians, receiving God's blessing just the same as

Jews. Then he showed how the Old Testament prophets had foretold that the Gentiles should be converted to the true religion. Having made these preliminary statements, James announced it to be his judgment that the Jewish Christians "trouble not them that from among the Gentiles turn to God." James had thus given a clear statement covering the essential point of the controversy. He had declared that in his judgment Gentiles could become Christians without keeping the Jewish customs. James evidently deemed it wise, however, to give some recognition to those Christians who still held tenaciously to the Jewish rites and ceremonies, for he advised that a letter be sent to the Gentile churches asking them to conform to the Jewish customs in four particulars.

The first request suggested by James was that the Gentile Christians "abstain from the pollutions of idols." This meant that the Gentile Christians should not buy and use meat which had been offered to idols. The second request was that the Gentile Christians should abstain from fornication, probably meaning the marriage of near relatives. The third request asked the Gentile Christians not to eat the flesh of any bird or beast which had been strangled. The fourth request recommended similar conduct regarding the use of blood as a food. The Jewish customs were very strict on these four points. No Jew would think of eating meat which had been used in pagan worship of an idol. The Jews would not eat the flesh of any bird or animal which had not been killed in the way prescribed by the Mosaic Law and they turned away in horror at the very thought of using blood as food. The Jews were taught these things from their earliest years and they did not always abandon these ideas when they became Christians.

A Delegation Sent to Antioch. Acts 15:22-29. The apostles and the elders and the whole Church seemed to be in hearty sympathy with the judgment which James had given. They decided to send a delegation from the Jerusalem church to the church in Antioch. They chose two of their members, Judas and Silas, as the members of this delegation and requested them to accompany Paul and Barnabas back to Antioch. They likewise wrote a

letter setting forth the findings of the council. This letter was to be sent not only to the church in Antioch, but also to other churches in Syria and to churches in Cilicia where the same questions as those which were disturbing the Antioch church had been raised.

This letter expressed the cordial greeting of the apostles and elders of the Jerusalem church to their Gentile brethren. It expressed regret that certain persons had gone from the Jerusalem church and raised a disturbance in Antioch and elsewhere. It stated that these persons had received no commission from the Jerusalem church to do as they had done. Paul and Barnabas were highly commended for the great work they had done among the Gentiles. The letter ended with a request that the four points which had before been mentioned be observed by the Gentile Christians.

A Rebellious Minority. There was evidently no dissenting vote when the decision of the council was reached. Indeed, the letter sent to the Gentile Christians said that the council had "come to one accord" on the matters under discussion. However, the Judaizers were only temporarily silenced. They had no idea of submitting to the will of the majority. They had lost in open and fair discussion but they had other weapons upon which they expected to fall back. Paul was by no means through with them. They were to be his most bitter opponents for many a year. We shall find that they deliberately planned to follow Paul's tracks over all his missionary journeys and to destroy the work he had done and wreck the Gentile churches he had organized unless the Gentile Christians should accept not only the four points of the Jewish law set forth in the letter sent out by the Council of Jerusalem but also every item of the Jewish customs.

Paul Contending for a Universal Brotherhood Within the Church. Gal. 1:11-21. Paul had won a victory for Gentile freedom, in the Council of Jerusalem. He had secured the written opinion of the apostles and elders of the Jerusalem church stating that Gentiles could enter the Christian church freely without first becoming Jewish proselytes. The status of the Gentile Christians within the Church and their social relationships with

Jewish Christians did not come up at the council. It was soon to arise, however. The Jews had for centuries refused to have any dealings with Gentiles beyond what was absolutely necessary. They would not eat at the same table with them. They would not enter their houses if they could help it. They thought that they must wash themselves thoroughly if they had so much as touched the garment of a Gentile. Were these social barriers to continue between Gentile Christians and Jewish Christians just as they had existed for centuries between Jew and pagan Gentile? Most of the Jewish Christians insisted that these barriers must remain just as they were. The very thought was abhorrent to Paul. He maintained that there is no Jew nor Greek in the Christian fellowship but that all are one in Jesus. This new controversy was soon seen to be quite as important as that which had just been settled at Jerusalem. It promised to be far more serious for Paul, for he soon found himself standing practically alone as the champion of universal and full brotherhood within the Church of Christ.

Peter Comes Down to Antioch. Soon after the Council of Jerusalem Peter came down to Antioch. In a spirit of Christian fellowship he entered the houses of Gentile Christians and ate at their tables. Word of what Peter had done soon reached Jerusalem and certain messengers arrived from James. Evidently these messengers took Peter to task for entering the houses of Gentiles and for eating with them. So Peter from that time refused to eat with Gentile Christians. The matter began to be very serious. There were many Jews among the Christians of Antioch and they began to follow Peter's example. They refused to eat with their Christian brethren who were of Gentile stock. There was thus set up a kind of aristocracy within the church. Christian fellowship was marred. The church was divided. It began to lose power. The splendid church which had sent Paul and Barnabas out on their first missionary tour began to decline. It was doomed to fall speedily unless the division could be healed, for no church divided against itself can stand long at any time, and in that day when many enemies were all around division was especially deadly.

Any movement which encourages people to think of themselves as superior to their fellow men is hard to deal with. It appeals to selfish pride. This notion of the Jewish Christians that they were superior to the Gentile Christians consequently grew apace. Even Barnabas was carried away by it. Paul stood alone, but he met the issue courageously. He rebuked Peter to his face and his bold stand for Christian social equality won the day in Antioch, at least.

The Lesson Prayer

O God, ou Father in heaven, teach us to be kindly and brotherly to all thy children. Some of us are professed followers of Jesus thy Son. Help those of us who have confessed his name to have something of his spirit of universal brotherhood. Forgive us if we have broken the laws of Christian fellowship. Forgive us if we have not been so friendly to any of the followers of Jesus as we should have been. Forgive us if our actions have been inconsistent; if we have been more friendly to some of thy children when we have met them in church than we have been when we have met them elsewhere. Help us to develop that democratic spirit of universal brotherhood and Christian equality which was such a leading characteristic of the great man whose life we are studying. Amen.

Supplemental Missionary Story

"The Knight of the Slave Girls." "The Book of Missionary Heroes," page 150.

EXPRESSIONAL SESSION

THE BREADTH OF THE CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

Col. 3:9-17

The pastor of a large and fashionable city church had been very active in securing new members. He was anxious to have these new recruits feel at home in the church, so he urged those who had long been members

of the church to call upon those who had just entered its membership. The response of the old-time members was not hearty. For some time this condition puzzled the pastor. He noticed that all the old-time members were cordial to the new members when they met in the church services but he could not get these old-time members to call at the homes of the new members to any great extent. At last a remark made by a woman on whom he was urging this duty of calling on new members, opened the pastor's eyes to the true situation. This woman said, "Well, I will call on those people on one condition, and that is that they understand fully that my call is a church call and not a social call." Then the pastor knew that there were certain social barriers running through his congregation, separating them one from another and marring that full fellowship which makes the Church of Christ strong and without which no church can be really prosperous in spiritual things.

It was this spirit of social division within the church that Paul had to combat in Antioch. The spirit of the woman who refused to call on new church members unless it was understood that her call was a church call, but not a social call, would have been disgusting to Paul. He had gained a vision of the sublime truth that true followers of Jesus are bound together in such a bond of fellowship that they are made one in Christ. He knew that there could not be among Christians "Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, bondman, freeman; but Christ is all, and in all."

Some Truths from the Lessons We Have Been Studying

Race prejudice, social prejudice, and any other thing which separates us from wide sympathy with our fellow men and causes us to refuse them followship, is mean, narrow, and unchristian.

Unsocial attitudes toward our fellow countrymen are unpatriotic, for our nation is "dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal."

There are persons with whom we cannot and ought not to have close fellowship, but our attitude toward such

persons is not based on social prejudice. It is based on the characteristics of the persons themselves, not on what their ancestors were or on their lack of learning or their poverty or on the color of their skin.

If Paul had not had sympathy with Gentiles and had not entered into fellowship with them, he would have made slow progress in winning them to Christ.

Review Questions

1. What change did Paul's conversion make in his attitude toward Gentiles?
2. Explain what Jesus meant in his words about putting new wine in old wine skins and a new patch on an old garment.
3. Show that the church of Antioch had the true spirit of Christianity.
4. Tell of the visit of the men from Judea to the church of Antioch.
5. How did Paul prepare for the council in Jerusalem?
6. Who were the Judaizers?
7. Tell of Peter's words before the council.
8. What was the substance of the judgment rendered by James?
9. What action did the council take?
10. Tell of Paul's conflict for a broad and universal fellowship within the Church.

Bible Verses

Acts 10:28; 17:26; Rom. 1:14; Gal. 1:11-13; 3:26-29; 6:10; Eph. 4:4-6; I Cor., ch. 13.

Study Topics

1. The Attitude of Jesus Toward Race Prejudice and Artificial Social Barriers.
2. The Right Attitude of an American Boy or Girl Toward Young Foreigners.
3. God's Law Concerning Foreigners. Lev. 19:33, 34.
4. A Faithful Negro Servant Who Saved the Life of a Prophet. Jer. 38:7-13.

5. Haman, a Man with Race Hatred in His Heart. Esth., chs. 5 to 7.

6. The Good Samaritan an Illustration of Christian Neighborliness. Luke 10:25-37.

7. The Universal Sympathy of Jesus. I. With Little Children. Matt. 18:1-6. II. With the Sick. Mark 1:40-42. III. With Those in Sorrow. John 11:35. IV. With Those Who Had Rejected Him. Luke 13:34, 35; 19:41-44.

8. Is It Right to Obey Social Customs Which Limit Our Fellowship with Christians?

9. The Harm Which Comes from Cliques in the Church and the Church School.

10. Can a Wide Fellowship Be Just as Deep and True as a Fellowship More Restricted?

The Lesson Truth Expressed in a Law

The Law of Christian Fellowship. The spirit of Jesus was one of wide sympathy with all humanity and one of closest fellowship with all who know and love God. Therefore:

1. We will not refuse to have fellowship with anyone on account of race, intellectual standing, material possessions, or artificial social barriers.

2. We will endeavor especially to maintain helpful and close fellowship with all who are believers in Jesus.

3. We will try to make our fellowships an agency for building up God's Kingdom of universal brotherhood on earth.

Projects for Putting the Lesson Truths Into Practice

The teacher of the class should be aware of the educational opportunity offered by the social situations which arise within the church school. Some church schools are wrecked, or fail to accomplish much of real value, because the pupils are narrow and clannish in their social fellowships. If any tendency to this situation is noted, the teacher should show plainly how the lesson truth applies to the situation. A class social in which a class-wide good fellowship was the goal would be a good way to put the truths of this lesson into practice.

CHAPTER XI

TURNING ONCE MORE TO THE MISSION FIELDS

WEEK DAY SESSION

VISITING THE CHURCHES ORGANIZED ON THE FIRST MISSIONARY JOURNEY

Acts 15:36-41; 16:1-10

When Paul and Barnabas with Judas and Silas reached Antioch and told of the decision of the Council of Jerusalem and read the letter which the council had sent out to the churches, there was great rejoicing in that city. Judas and Silas, themselves prophets or preachers of the gospel, preached to the Christians of Antioch. After a time the delegates from Jerusalem prepared to return to their home. They were sent back with messages of cordial friendship to the church of Jerusalem. If Silas returned to Jerusalem with Judas, he must have come back to Antioch shortly afterward, for we soon hear of him again in that city.

Paul and Barnabas now settled down for a season of teaching and preaching in Antioch. The church there had now grown so large that two men could not do all the preaching and teaching and pastoral work. Luke has told us that not only Paul and Barnabas, but "many others also," took part in the work of ministering to the Christians of Antioch and in the work of winning new converts for the faith.

A Sharp Contention Between Intimate Friends. Acts 15:36-41. Paul and Barnabas thought often of the converts to Christ whom they had left in far-away lands and longed to know how they were getting along. When the work in Antioch had been once more put in a satisfactory condition, Paul one day said to Barnabas, "Let us return now and visit the brethren in every city wherein we proclaimed the word of the Lord, and see how they fare." Barnabas was quite as eager as Paul was to visit

the Christians whom they had left in distant countries, so they began to plan for another great tour. Barnabas proposed that they should take John Mark with them as they had done before. Paul had evidently made up his mind not to take John Mark on another missionary tour. Paul disapproved of John Mark's leaving the party on the former trip when they reached Pamphylia. Paul was very firm when he had once made up his mind and he refused to consider Mark as a possible member of the contemplated journey.

Barnabas was a kindly man and wished to give his young cousin another chance. When Barnabas was sure that he was in the right, he could be quite as firm as Paul. So there came to be a conflict of opinions on the subject. Luke says that "a sharp contention" arose between Paul and Barnabas. These two intimate friends could not agree. Barnabas had befriended Paul by winning the apostles over to a confidence in him when all the Christians were afraid of him. He had unselfishly sought Paul in Tarsus and brought him to the great opportunity in Antioch. The two had labored side by side through dangers and hardships, but the time had now come when they could not agree. So they decided to separate and divide the field between them. Barnabas took John Mark with him and went to Cyprus, while Paul chose Silas as his companion and set out to reach the mission fields of Asia Minor by traveling overland.

It will be remembered that Paul had labored some ten years in Cilicia and Syria with Tarsus as his headquarters. He had probably organized a good many churches in that region before he received the invitation of Barnabas to come to Antioch. It was Paul's plan to visit these churches on his way to the churches of Asia Minor. So, as Luke wrote, "he went through Syria and Cilicia, confirming the churches."

We are not given any information concerning the work which Barnabas and Mark did in Cyprus. Both Barnabas and Mark drop out of the New Testament narratives for a time. We hear of both again, however, in Paul's letters. It is good to know that Paul and Barnabas were not made enemies by their honest difference

of opinion. Paul speaks in high praise of both Barnabas and Mark. During his imprisonment in Rome, Paul sent for Mark. Writing to his helper, Timothy, he said, "Take Mark, and bring him with thee; for he is useful to me for ministering." Mark had long since made good and had become one of Paul's most trusted helpers. We must believe that Paul was wrong and Barnabas right in the controversy about Mark. Paul had his faults. He was not a saint, if we mean by that term one who is faultless. He was just an honest, earnest, great-souled man who occasionally made blunders like other people.

Timothy Joins Paul's Party at Lystra. Acts 16:1-5. Paul and Silas journeyed northward from Antioch of Syria visiting the churches of Syria and Cilicia. They came to Paul's home town of Tarsus, then they crossed the Taurus Mountains and came to Derbe where Paul and Barnabas had turned back on their first missionary journey. Having visited the Christians in Derbe, they pushed on to Lystra. Here Paul was again welcomed into the household of Eunice and Lois. It had been some two years since Paul left Lystra. During that time Paul's young friend Timothy had developed into a strong Christian leader. He was beloved not only by his fellow Christians in Lystra but was also well known among the members of the church in the neighboring city of Iconium. Paul was so much impressed by Timothy's abilities and his consecration to the cause of Christ that he chose Timothy to become his helper.

So Timothy joined Paul's missionary party at Lystra and journeyed with Paul and Silas onward through the other towns where churches had been organized on the first missionary journey. As the party went from church to church, they told of the council which had met in Jerusalem and of its decisions. They left in the churches copies of the letter which the apostles and elders had sent out.

The visit of the missionary party was very helpful to the churches. They were strengthened in their faith by the preaching of Paul and his helpers, and encouraged as they learned of the growth of the Christian religion in other cities and other lands. The party did something

more than preach to those who were already Christians. It was an evangelistic campaign as well as a series of meetings intended to strengthen the Christians. Consequently, wherever the party held meetings, many new converts were won for the religion of Jesus.

Guided by an Unseen Hand. Acts 16:6-10. Paul and his party doubtless visited Iconium and Antioch of Pisidia just as they had visited Derbe and Lystra. From Antioch they entered new territory. Instead of going south toward Perga and following the road which Paul and Barnabas had traversed twice on the first missionary journey, they journeyed westward into the province of Asia. Paul was evidently heading for the great city of Ephesus, which lay only about two hundred miles west of Antioch of Pisidia.

When the party had gone about a day's journey into the province of Asia, and were heading directly for Ephesus, they changed their course from west to north. Luke simply states that Paul and his companions were "forbidden of the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia." Paul felt himself to be guided by an unseen hand and in some way God revealed to him that it was not the divine will that the gospel should be preached just then in the province of Asia.

Having turned away from the highway which led to Ephesus, the party moved north and west until they were near the borders of the country called Mysia. Paul then decided to lead his party into the province of Bithynia which lay on the southern shores of the Black Sea, or the Pontus Euxinus, as it was called in those days. Again God showed Paul that Bithynia was not the field which had been chosen for the immediate evangelistic efforts of the party. God likewise let Paul know in some way that the land of Mysia was not the chosen field of labor, so they kept on westward until they reached the sea coast at Troas near the site of ancient Troy.

The Macedonian Call. Paul and his party had now reached the sea, and had no definite plans as to just where to go next. They were seeking to know God's will and wished to find the field which he had chosen for their labors. God revealed his will to Paul in a vision of

the night. Paul saw a man of Macedonia standing and beseeching him and saying, "Come over into Macedonia, and help us." In the morning Paul told his companions of his vision and they agreed that it was a call of God asking them to cross the sea and bear the gospel into the continent of Europe. So they began to make inquiries concerning ships which might be sailing from Troas to some of the cities of Macedonia.

Luke, the Good Physician, Becomes a Member of Paul's Party. It is now almost universally believed that Luke wrote The Acts of the Apostles. He was a physician and seems to have joined Paul's party at Troas. The accounts of the journeyings of Paul and his companions contain only the word "they" up to the time when the party reached Troas. In telling of Paul's vision and its interpretation by the members of the party the pronoun "we" suddenly replaces the pronoun "they" which has been used in all preceding paragraphs. So New Testament scholars believe that Luke was in Troas and that he joined Paul's party there, going with them to the cities of Macedonia which lay across the sea.

The addition of Luke to the party was a great blessing. Being a physician he was probably of much use to Paul who suffered at times, as we have seen, from some bodily ailment. Luke's coming had another far-reaching effect, which has brought a blessing to the people of all the centuries since his day. Luke was a scholarly man. He kept notes concerning the events of this and subsequent journeys which he made with Paul. He gathered information concerning Paul's life previous to the time when he and Luke met one another. Later, Luke wrote out a sketch covering the history of the early Church. The sketch which Luke wrote is now called The Acts of the Apostles.

Luke was also engaged in another literary task during the years when he was Paul's physician and companion. He had an opportunity to meet many who had known Jesus during the days when Jesus was preaching and teaching in Galilee and Judea. It is thought that he became acquainted with Mary, the mother of Jesus, and with others of the group of women who accompanied

Jesus and helped to supply the money with which the company of the disciples met their necessary expenses. In this way Luke gathered much information concerning the life of Jesus, especially concerning his infancy and childhood. He wrote out these items of information and the result is that part of the New Testament which we now call "The Gospel According to Luke."

Suggestions for Notebook Work

Trace on the notebook maps Paul's journey from Antioch of Syria through Syria and and Cilicia to Tarsus, over the Taurus Mountains to Derbe, to Lystra, to Iconium, to Antioch of Pisidia, westward about a third of the way from Antioch of Pisidia to Philadelphia, then northward to a point about south of the present site of Constantinople, thence westward to the coast at Troas. Add to the Chronological Table of Paul's Life the following item: "Second Missionary Journey, A. D. 49-51." Picture: Conversion of the Philippian Jailer, No. 738.

SUNDAY SESSION

THE GOSPEL CARRIED INTO EUROPE

Acts 16:11-40

Many people who have accomplished really great things in life have felt as Paul did as he moved on toward Troas. They have been conscious of an unseen and guiding hand which was leading them on. They have followed the leadings of Providence and have later come to understand the goal which was unknown to them but which the Power guiding their lives evidently had in view. We have no intimation that Paul intended to carry the gospel into new territory on the second missionary journey. He evidently intended only to visit the churches which had already been organized on the first journey. We have seen how he was led beyond the limits of his contemplated trip and guided steadily down to the coast of that arm of the Mediterranean Sea which separates Asia from Europe. In this lesson we are to learn about

the work which God had in view for Paul and his helpers and toward which his hand steadily led them.

Crossing the Sea and Invading a New Continent. Acts 16:11-13. Paul and his companions found a vessel sailing from Troas into Macedonia and took passage upon it. The first day, the wind being favorable, they were able to sail in a straight course to Samothrace, an island lying off the coast of the province of Thrace. As the ship drew near this island, Paul and his party must have caught their first glimpse of that European continent toward which they were bound. The island has a mountain which rises over five thousand feet above the sea and can be seen from a long distance. It was probably toward this mountain top appearing above the waves that the sailors directed the course of the ship.

The next day the ship reached Neapolis, and the party went on shore. Without tarrying in this seaport town they pushed on to Philippi, lying some ten miles beyond the city of Neapolis. Philippi lay within the province of Macedonia and was an important city. Rich mines of gold and silver existed in its neighborhood and it was blessed with many natural fountains of water. It was a historic spot, many famous battles having been fought in its vicinity. The Roman Emperor Augustus had here won a decisive victory which established him as ruler over the known world. He had honored Philippi by giving many of his veteran soldiers homes there and by giving it the privileges of a Roman colony.

The First Convert in Europe. Acts 16:14, 15. When they came into Philippi, Paul and his party felt that they had reached a city in which God had work for them to do. So they tarried there several days. They evidently found no synagogue in the city, but they heard of a little band of women who were accustomed to meet on the Sabbath beside the river which flowed near the town. On the Sabbath Paul and his companions went to this riverside prayer meeting. They sat down with the women and talked with them.

Some of these women may have been of the Jewish race, but most of them were probably Gentiles who had in some way learned a little about the God of the Jews

and who had undertaken to serve him as best they could. In the company was a certain woman named Lydia. She was from Thyatira, a city of Asia Minor, but was making her home in Philippi. She was a merchant, engaged in the sale of the costly dyes or dyed goods, for which her native city was famous.

Lydia gave "heed unto the things which were spoken by Paul." Having confessed her faith in Jesus as the Saviour of the world, she was baptized, as were all the members of her household. The gospel had thus won its first triumph in Europe by the conversion of a woman with all her household.

Having become a Christian, Lydia quickly manifested a spirit of Christian hospitality toward the missionaries. She invited them to come into her house and to make it their home during their stay in the city. "If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord," she said, "come into my house, and abide there." The missionaries seem to have protested at first. Perhaps they thought that so considerable a party would impose an unjust burden upon their new friend. Lydia insisted on their accepting her invitation. Luke says in his brief but picturesque way, "And she constrained us."

Flogging and Imprisonment. Acts 16:16-26. The happy beginning of the work in Philippi was soon marred. One day Paul and Silas were going to the place of prayer, perhaps the spot on the river bank where they had first preached Christ in Europe. There was a certain young woman in the city who was a kind of fortune teller. She may have been afflicted with that mysterious malady which in the New Testament is called demon possession. The men who had this young woman under their control made a great deal of money by having her tell people's fortunes.

When this young woman saw Paul and Silas she cried out, "These men are servants of the Most High God, who proclaim unto you the way of salvation." She had done this on many occasions and Paul had become sorely troubled about the matter, so he turned about and by a word healed the young woman of her peculiar malady and spiritual condition. The men who had the young

woman under their care soon discovered that her fortune-telling powers were gone. She was in a much better condition than she had been, but her masters did not think of this. They thought only of the loss which had come to them through the healing of the young woman and her consequent inability to act as a fortune teller.

These men who had been in control of the demon-possessed girl succeeded in stirring up a riot against Paul and Silas. They laid hands on the missionaries and dragged them before the magistrates of the city. They said to the city officials, "These men, being Jews, do exceedingly trouble our city, and set forth customs which it is not lawful for us to receive, or to observe, being Romans." The Philippians were proud of their Roman citizenship and they were prejudiced against the Jews. The enemies of Paul knew this and cunningly planned their charges in such a way as to stir up the enmity of the people of the city, and of the city officials.

When the magistrates heard the charge, they made a great show of being horrified. They seized Paul and Silas and without any pretense at a trial tore off their clothing and ordered them to be flogged. When they had laid many stripes upon them, they cast them into prison and charged the jailer to keep them fast. Having received this order of the magistrates, the jailer put the missionaries into the inner prison and made their feet fast in the stocks.

The prisons of that time were dreadful places. They were usually filled with the lowest and most degenerate people of all the Roman Empire and they were places of brutal torture. Paul and Silas, however, were not crushed into silence by the cruel beating and the gloom of their awful abode. At the hour of midnight the missionaries lifted up their voices, singing psalms and perhaps some of the new Christian songs which were coming into existence. The grim population of the prison was gathered around the crib in which the missionaries lay with the heavy wooden beams of the stocks clamped upon their ankles. Occasionally Paul and Silas ceased their singing and lifted their voices to God in prayer.

Suddenly there was a deep roaring sound which seemed

to come right up out of the bowels of the earth. The grim old prison began to tremble. The rocks within the walls moved, grinding upon one another. The great beams of the roof were shaken out of their places. The iron-covered doors strained upon their huge hinges and gave way, flying open as the weight of the building settled down upon the crushed foundations. The air of the place was filled with dust and the lights were all extinguished.

A Striking Conversion. Acts 16:27-35. The earthquake shocks had scarcely ceased when the jailer came running into the shattered prison. In the gloom he could see that all the prison doors were off their hinges and he supposed that the prisoners had made their escape. Under the stern laws of that time his life would pay the penalty for having allowed the prisoners to get away. He was about to kill himself, but Paul, ever a cool-headed person in times of danger and excitement, called out to the jailer to do himself no harm, telling him that all the prisoners were still there. Calling for a light, the jailer found that it was even as Paul said.

Perhaps this jailer had heard something of the preaching of the missionaries and was now persuaded that they spoke the truth, for he brought Paul and Silas out of the prison and said to them, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" They replied, "Believe on the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved, thou and thy house." The jailer soon gave evidence that he was genuinely converted. He took the missionaries and washed their wounds. After Paul and Silas had given some further instruction to the jailer and his family, the whole household were baptized into the fellowship of the followers of Jesus. There was now great rejoicing in the jailer's household. He did all he could to make amends for the cruel treatment the missionaries had received. He took them into his own home and set food before them.

The Magistrates Are Frightened When They Learn that Paul and Silas Are Roman Citizens. The terrible earthquake had put the magistrates in a different mood from that in which they had been when they abused the missionaries the preceding evening. They probably connected the earthquake with Paul and Silas and were filled

with superstitious fear. Early in the morning they sent word saying, "Let those men go." The jailer reported these words to Paul, but Paul refused to be thus dismissed. He said to the jailer, "They have beaten us publicly, uncondemned, men that are Romans, and have cast us into prison; and do they now cast us out privily? nay verily; but let them come themselves and bring us out."

When the magistrates heard these courageous words of Paul and realized that they had beaten Roman citizens without a hearing, subjecting them to public indignity and casting them into prison, they were more frightened than they had been by the earthquake. They were willing to submit to almost any humiliation to get out of the predicament into which they had gotten themselves. So they came to the prison and brought the missionaries forth and humbly asked them to go away from the city.

Paul and Silas and the other members of the party refused to leave hurriedly. They all went to the house of Lydia and gathered the Christian believers together for a farewell meeting. The Christians had been greatly troubled because of what had been done to Paul and Silas, but these two made light of the hardships they had experienced and were chiefly concerned to comfort their brethren who had been in distress and sorrow during the time that the missionaries had been in the hands of the mob and in prison. After the meeting in the house of Lydia was ended, Paul and his companions departed from the city. It is believed, however, that Luke remained behind in Philippi, possibly to look after the work there and to help the converts to organize a church.

The Lesson Prayer

Teach us, our Father in heaven, to recognize thy guidance in all our life choices. When we hear thy voice, help us to obey thy commandments, even though we may not be able to understand thy plans or recognize thy purposes. Thus lead us through all the days of our life that we may be always engaged in the work that thou wouldest have us do and may accomplish something for the upbuilding of thy Kingdom in the world and for the per-

manent good of our fellow men. We ask in Jesus' name. Amen.

SUPPLEMENTAL MISSIONARY STORY

"The Woman Who Conquered Cannibals." "The Book of Missionary Heroes," page 196.

EXPRESSIONAL SESSION

THE PLACE OF DIVINE GUIDANCE IN A GREAT AND USEFUL LIFE

I Kings 19:9-18

Our Scripture lesson tells how God guided the Prophet Elijah at a time when he was lonely and discouraged. God spoke to his servant, not through the storm, nor through the earthquake, nor through the fire, but in "a still small voice" evidently within the consciousness of the prophet. God's guidance is often mentioned in connection with the lives of the great men and women of the Bible, but he guides people to-day quite as truly as he did in the centuries during which the Bible was being written. Every truly great and useful life owes its greatness and its usefulness to the guidance of God. Most great-souled men and women have been conscious that they were led by an unseen hand. They have become more and more convinced of this, the longer they have lived. Looking back across the years of life they have seen how God was guiding them toward goals of which they knew nothing but which God surely had in view. Thousands and tens of thousands of people who have lived nobly and helpfully have been as sure of God's guidance in their lives as they could possibly be. Columbus was persevering in his twenty years' quest for a means of sailing westward to the Indies, because he firmly believed that God was guiding him and had chosen him to open the way for the Christian religion into the unknown regions of the earth. In the days just before the Civil War, Abraham Lincoln said: "I know there is a God, and that he hates the injustice of slavery. I see the storm coming and I know that his hand is in it. If

he has a place and a work for me, and I think he has, I believe I am ready."

It is exceedingly important for young people to recognize the guiding power of God in their lives. It thus becomes possible for them to coöperate with the Eternal One. They need this consciousness of divine leadership when they make such important decisions as the choice of a life work. They need it as they undertake to prepare themselves for their life tasks. A consciousness of the guiding hand of God gives a person patience, confidence, stability of purpose, diligence, and self-control. These elements of character make for a truly successful life, no matter what the task may be which God in his providence has assigned to the individual. John Wanamaker began life as a very poor boy, but he became one of the greatest merchants in the world. His motto was, "Think, act, and trust in God."

Some Truths from the Lessons We Have Been Studying

God uses people sometimes as his instruments for guiding other people into the right kind of tasks. He used Paul to guide young Timothy into the work of a missionary.

Paul and his party were not far from Antioch of Pisidia. Half a thousand miles away in another continent a little group of women were praying for more light. God guided Paul across the sea that he might find this group of women and give them the gospel of Jesus. Equally remarkable answers to prayer and equally clear cases of the guiding hand of God are not uncommon to-day, especially in the work of the foreign missionaries.

Sometimes God leads his servants through great afflictions in order that great good may be accomplished. Through their prison experiences Paul and Silas were brought to a place where they could be used for the conversion of the Philippian jailer and his family.

Review Questions

1. Tell of the contention between Paul and Barnabas. Which do you think was right?

2. How had Timothy showed himself worthy to become the helper of Paul?
3. In what way did the visit of Paul and his party help the churches?
4. Tell how Paul was guided down to Troas on the Mediterranean Sea.
5. How did he happen to think of crossing into Europe?
6. Who was Luke and what contribution did he make toward the advancement of the Christian religion in the world?
7. Name the cities and provinces through which Paul and his companions passed in their journey from Antioch of Syria to Philippi.
8. Tell of the first conversions in Europe.
9. Tell of the circumstances leading to the conversion of the Philippian jailer.
10. Did Paul do right in refusing to leave the prison until the magistrates came and brought him out?

Bible Verses

Ps. 25:9; 32:8, 9; 48:4; 61:1, 2; 73:23, 24; 77:20; 139:23, 24; 143:10; Isa. 58:11; Rom. 8:14; Gal. 5:18.

Study Topics

1. God's Guidance for Those Who Are Seeking the Truth. John 16:12-14.
2. How God Led the Israelites in the Wilderness. Ex. 13:21, 22.
3. The Shepherd Psalm and What It Teaches About God's Care for His People. Psalm 23.
4. Abraham's Servant and His Prayer for Guidance. Gen. 24:10-14.
5. An Old Man's Testimony Concerning God's Care. Gen. 48:15, 16.
6. How Joshua Recognized the Guidance of God. Josh., ch. 23.
7. Why It Is a Good Thing for Boys and Girls to Seek the Guidance of God at an Early Age.
8. Qualities of Character Which Are Developed by

the Consciousness That God Is Guiding One's Life. (For the pastor.)

9. How Can We Tell What God Would Have Us Do? (For the teacher of the class.)

10. One Great Man or Woman Who Was Conscious of the Guidance of God. (Let each member of the class name at least one such person and show that he, or she, believed in the guiding power of God.)

The Lesson Truth Expressed in a Law

The Law of Obedience to the Divine Guidance. We believe that God wishes to help every person to live worthily and helpfully and that he will guide every person into ways of spiritual growth and service if he is permitted to do so. Therefore:

1. We will seek to know the will of God in all we do or plan.
2. We will strive to do what God would have us do, even when we are not able to understand his purposes.
3. We will try to help others to know and obey the will of God.

Projects for Putting the Lesson Truths Into Practice

Have a quiet-hour service in which the chief object of petition is for the guidance of God in the plans of the class. If the class has certain projects under way, the teacher should lead the pupils to look on these tasks as having been undertaken and prosecuted under the guidance of God.

CHAPTER XII

ENTERING NEW TERRITORY AND GRAPPLING WITH NEW DIFFICULTIES

WEEK DAY SESSION

FROM PHILIPPI TO CORINTH

Acts 17:1 to 18:4

After leaving Philippi, Paul and his companions traveled toward the southwest. Passing through the cities of Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica. Amphipolis is about thirty-three miles from Philippi and Apollonia is thirty miles farther on. The missionaries followed a great Roman highway known as the Egnatian Way. Paul evidently wished whenever possible to begin his work in any city by preaching in the synagogues of the Jews, thus giving his fellow countrymen the first opportunity to hear about the Messiah whom God had sent in fulfillment of his promises made to their forefathers. There were no synagogues in Amphipolis and Apollonia so Paul pushed on to Thessalonica where there were many Jews and a synagogue.

Three Weeks in Thessalonica. Acts 17:1-9. Having decided to tarry for a little while in Thessalonica, Paul went into the synagogue and preached. He told the people about Jesus. He told them of his teaching, his acts of power and mercy, and his crucifixion. He told them about the resurrection of Jesus. He tried to lead his hearers to see that the Old Testament had foretold just these facts concerning the Messiah. His goal was to persuade the members of the congregation that Jesus is the one whom God had promised as the Saviour of the world.

Some of the Jews were persuaded by Paul's preaching and declared that they were ready to follow the teachings of Paul and Silas. There were a great many Greeks connected with the synagogue. They were worshipers of the God of the Jews, proselytes, they were called. These

Greeks in large numbers accepted the gospel as it was preached by Paul and Silas. There were also many of the leading women of the city who believed the message and wished to be considered followers of Jesus.

Just as in Lystra and other cities so in Thessalonica certain Jews, especially the leaders of the synagogue, became jealous of the popularity of Paul and Silas among the people of the congregation. There are some people so inherently selfish that they always look at events with an eye to the probable effect of these events upon themselves. The leaders of the synagogue, after Paul had preached three Sabbaths, raised a great uproar. They called to their aid the lowest elements of the city and incited them against the missionaries just as the priests and Pharisees had enlisted the night crowd of Jerusalem in their schemes against the life of Jesus.

A certain man named Jason had received Paul and the other missionaries into his home. Thinking that they might find the missionaries in the house of Jason, the mob attacked it, expecting to drag Paul and his companions forth and stone them. But Paul was not in the house of Jason, and neither were any of Paul's helpers. Disappointed in not finding their intended victims, the leaders of the mob seized Jason and certain others who had become Christians. They dragged them before the city officials. Certain rumors concerning the preaching of Paul and Silas had evidently found their way into Thessalonica before the arrival of the missionary party. The people of the city had probably heard about the earthquake in Philippi which was only sixty-three miles away and on the same great Roman highway. So the leaders of the mob said to the city officials, "These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also." They charged Jason and the other Christians with receiving the missionaries into their houses and declared that the Christians were guilty of treasonable acts and treasonable teachings in that they did contrary to the decrees of Cæsar and taught that there was another king, one Jesus.

It was a time when any person who was suspected of being disloyal to the Roman emperor was in great peril.

The magistrates knew that they must at least show zeal in prosecuting any charges of the kind now brought against the Christians. But they had not the missionaries before them. They had only a few citizens of Thessalonica who had always been regarded as good citizens and loyal subjects of the emperor. The rulers thought of a shrewd scheme to put a stop to the work of the missionaries. They put Jason and the other Christians who had been seized with him under bond to keep the peace. They had now made it impossible for Paul and his helpers to do more in the city. If further work there had meant only possible persecution for themselves, Paul and his companions might have stayed longer, but now that Jason and the others were under bond, further preaching would have meant trouble and possibly death for Jason and the other Christians. Paul's wrath was kindled by this device of the magistrates which stopped his work in Thessalonica and kept him away from the city when he longed to return and help the brethren there. In his letter written to the Thessalonians from Corinth, he refers to this act of the magistrates in putting Jason and the others under bond as a device of Satan.

Paul Followed by His Enemies. Acts 17:10-15. Escaping from Thessalonica by night Paul and his party went on as far as Berea, a city fifty miles west of Thessalonica. Here following his usual custom Paul went into the Jewish synagogue and preached that Jesus is the Messiah. The Jews of Berea were more noble than the Jewish leaders of Thessalonica. They did not become jealous of Paul and Silas, but searched the Scriptures to see whether what Paul and the others taught was in harmony with what the Old Testament prophets had said about the Messiah. The kind of Messiah of which Paul told was very different from the kind of Messiah they had been taught to expect, but when they studied once more such great passages as the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah they saw at once that Jesus had fulfilled in a wonderful way the Old Testament predictions concerning the Messiah. So it came to pass that many Jews and Greeks, both men and women, became professed followers of Jesus in Berea.

When the Jews of Thessalonica heard that Paul was preaching in Berea, they came to that city and began to stir up trouble. It was thought best by the Christians of Berea and the members of the missionary party to have Paul quietly withdraw from the city rather than stay and face the enemies from Thessalonica and the mob which they were gathering. So some of the Christians went with Paul down to the sea and afterward accompanied him to Athens. Silas and Timothy, however, remained in Berea to carry on the work quietly and to give the Christians help in organizing a church. As these Christian brethren left Paul in Athens and turned homeward, Paul sent word by them to Silas and Timothy telling them to hasten on and join him in Athens.

Paul Preaching in the Market Places of the World's Intellectual Capital. Acts 17:16-21. While Paul waited in Athens for Silas and Timothy to join him, he rambled about the city. Athens was then the intellectual capital of the world quite as truly as Rome was the political capital. Great universities were there. Thousands of students from all over the world came to the schools of Athens. It was the center of art and literature and philosophy. Paul noted the great numbers of idols erected not only in the temples of the city, but everywhere along its streets and parks. The Athenians had erected a statue to every god of whom they had ever heard. They had even erected an altar with the inscription, "To an Unknown God," evidently fearing that they had slighted some deity.

Paul was too deeply in earnest to spend time in mere sight-seeing. He went into the synagogues of the Jews and preached there and he went into the market places and preached every day. We are not told that Paul's preaching in the synagogues of Athens had any effect one way or the other. He seems not to have made any converts and likewise not to have awakened any violent opposition. Perhaps the Athenian Jews were just indifferent. They were citizens of the world's intellectual capital, proud of their learning and liberal toward new religious doctrines, but with the liberalness of indifference.

Paul's preaching in the market place attracted little attention. Some of the philosophers heard him speak and

became mildly interested. They invited him to address their great gathering known as the Court of the Areopagus. It met on a famous spot known as Mars' Hill. Thus Paul was given an opportunity to preach before the Stoic and Epicurean philosophers and other great men of the city.

Paul's Address on Mars' Hill. Acts 17:22-34. Paul was a great thinker himself and he doubtless determined to do his best to persuade this gathering of Gentile philosophers that the religion of Jesus is the one true religion of the world. His address gives evidence of having been carefully prepared. He began courteously and tactfully. He spoke of the evidences of religious interest within the city. He referred to the altar which he had seen and which bore the inscription, "To an Unknown God." From this starting point he proceeded to tell the Athenians that he wished, indeed, to bring them a message from a God who was unknown to them. He declared that this unknown God had made the world and all things therein; that he was the Lord of heaven and earth and did not dwell in temples made by men's hands. He told them that this God was the Creator of men and the great First Cause for whom all earnest souls were blindly groping. He spoke of the presence of God everywhere, saying, "He is not far from each one of us: for in him we live, and move, and have our being." He quoted from a certain Athenian poet to show that what he was saying was not utterly strange even among pagan people. He tried to show them that they "ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and device of man."

Paul's great address reached its climax when he undertook to show that God had revealed himself in the Man, Christ Jesus, in his life and teachings, and especially in his death and resurrection. When some of the audience heard about the resurrection, they began to scoff. They probably thought themselves too intellectual to believe anything of that sort. Some of the others had become really interested, however, and expressed a desire to hear more about the resurrection of Jesus. The address was not without some fruits. A certain man named Dionysius

who was a member of the court accepted the Christian faith, as did also a woman named Damaris and some others.

Paul Leaves Athens and Goes to Corinth. Acts 18:1-4. Paul left Athens soon after his address before the Court of the Areopagus. Entering Corinth he found there a Jew named Aquila with his wife Priscilla. These people were tentmakers and Paul made his home with them and worked with them at the task of making tents. He soon began to preach in the synagogues on the Sabbath, seeking to persuade both Jews and Greeks to become Christians.

Suggestions for Notebook Work

Trace on the notebook maps the journey of Paul's party from Troas to Philippi, to Thessalonica, to Berea, to Athens. Locate and name the cities through which the party passed, but in which they did not stop to preach. Picture: Paul Preaching in Athens, by Raphael, No. 460.

SUNDAY SESSION

COMPLETION OF THE SECOND MISSIONARY JOURNEY

I Cor. 2:1-5; Acts 18:5-22; Gal. 1:1-10; 3:1-14; I Thess. 4:1-18

Most people who have accomplished great tasks in life have had periods of deep despondency from time to time as they have grappled with vast difficulties and fought for their beloved cause under fearful odds. Elijah had such a nervous collapse after the contest on Mount Carmel that he ran away into the deserts, lay down in the scanty shade of a shrub, and wished that he might die. In his gloomy cell within the castle of Herod, John the Baptist wondered whether he might not have been mistaken in his declaration that Jesus is the Messiah. The very intensity with which people of great devotion work at their tasks makes the danger of a nervous collapse imminent. In this lesson we shall see how Paul

had experiences similar to those of other great men; how he at times seemed almost ready to give up in despair.

A Struggle with Giant Despair. I Cor. 2:1-5. From certain utterances in his letters it seems certain that Paul came to Corinth in a state of great spiritual depression. Such feelings would have been natural for him at that time because of a chain of circumstances which had befallen him. Paul had just made a great effort at Athens. He saw the great possibilities in that intellectual center of the world. He knew what a help to the cause of Christ it would be to have a strong Christian church in Athens. His work in Athens was not entirely fruitless. One man and one woman are named as having accepted the gospel truth after Paul's address before the Areopagus. It is also stated that there were a few others who believed, as well as a number who expressed a wish to hear more concerning Christianity. Nevertheless, Paul did not succeed in organizing a church in Athens. He doubtless regretted this, and this comparative failure probably added to his sense of discouragement as he turned away from Athens and went on toward Corinth.

During this time Paul was alone most of the time. He had sent word to his helpers, Silas and Timothy, asking them to hasten on and join him, but there seems to have been a long delay in their coming, or it may be that they came and went away again. Loneliness and anxiety thus helped to depress the spirit of Paul.

About this time Paul received discouraging news from the church which he had established in Thessalonica. The little band of Christians there was undergoing severe persecutions. More distressing still was the report that the Christians were divided into unfriendly parties, one against another, and that many of those who professed to be followers of Jesus were falling back into the low standards of morality which had characterized them as pagans. It looked as though the church in Thessalonica was going to pieces, because of the persecutions heaped upon the Christians and because of their own dissensions.

These facts help us to understand what Paul meant when he wrote to the Corinthians that he was among them "in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling."

Troubles seldom come singly and a multitude of discouraging experiences seem to have fallen upon Paul at the time he left Athens and entered Corinth.

Paul's High Resolve. I Cor. 2:1, 2. Paul's experiences in Athens had, as we have seen, a good deal to do with his discouragement, but he learned a lesson from this experience. In Athens he had made a great address. It was an address such as a great orator might have considered as his masterpiece, but it did not produce large results. When Paul went to Corinth, he had made up his mind that he would henceforth confine his preaching to a simple theme. He determined not to know anything among the people of Corinth "save Jesus Christ and him crucified."

Paul's Vision of Jesus in the Hours of Night. Acts 18:10, 11. How long Paul's sense of discouragement lasted, we do not know. He probably did not fully regain that splendid faith and courage which was usually his until after he had seen Jesus in a night vision. One night Paul seemed to see Jesus and again to hear his voice as he had heard it on the road to Damascus. Jesus had often said to his disciples and to the sick and discouraged people who came to him for help, "Be not afraid; be of good cheer." So now he speaks in like terms to his servant Paul who is worn with labors and hardships and discouraged by impending dangers and threatened disasters, "Be not afraid, but speak and hold not thy peace: for I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to harm thee: for I have much people in this city."

The Missionaries Turn to the Gentiles After Being Rejected by the Jews of Corinth. Acts 18:5-9. Paul had begun his work in Corinth in his usual way. He had preached in the synagogue of the Jews. Soon after Timothy and Silas arrived from Macedonia, the Jews set themselves against Paul and hindered his work to such an extent that he ceased to carry on any teaching in the synagogues. A certain man named Titus Justus had become a Christian. His house was near the synagogue and he offered it to Paul as a meeting place for the Christians. Paul's work was beginning to bear fruit. Many of the citizens of Corinth had declared themselves believ-

ers in Jesus; among these was the ruler of the Jewish synagogue, a man named Crispus.

Paul Again Brought into Court. Acts 18:12-17. Although Paul and the other Christians had withdrawn from the synagogue, they were not allowed to pursue their labors in peace. Here as elsewhere the Jews were determined to put a stop to the preaching of the gospel. They seized Paul and brought him before the Roman governor, Gallio. They expected to have Paul condemned, or beaten and driven from the city, but the matter turned out very differently from what they expected. With the keen governmental instinct for which the Romans were noted, Gallio perceived that Paul was no criminal, but only a person against whom the Jews were prejudiced because of certain differences which they had with him on matters of religion. He would not sit in judgment in such matters and ordered the court room cleared of the clamoring Jews. There was strong prejudice against the Jews in Corinth and their enemies now saw an opportunity to express their ill will toward the Hebrew race. As the Jews were driven out of the court room, they were assaulted by a mob. Sosthenes, who had now become ruler of the synagogue and who had doubtless acted as spokesman in the accusations against Paul, was seized and beaten. The act was probably due to hatred of the Jews rather than to sympathy with Paul and the Christian religion.

Paul's Writing as an Aid in His Work. It was at about this time that Paul wrote the first of the letters which have come down to us in the New Testament. While in Corinth he wrote the First Epistle to the Thessalonians. Filled with anxiety for the welfare of his Christian brethren, Paul sought to strengthen them in their time of persecution and to guide them into a full devotion to the Christian religion. Paul probably wrote with only the handful of Christians in Thessalonica in mind, but God has given the letter which he wrote a usefulness far beyond any thought of its author. It has been a help not only to the few Christians for whom Paul intended it but also for tens of thousands of the followers of Jesus in all the centuries which have passed since it was penned.

The Thessalonians misunderstood and misapplied some of the things which Paul said in his first letter to them, so Paul wrote again. By these letters, and perhaps by others which have been lost, Paul kept in touch with the work he had begun in Thessalonica and thus succeeded in safeguarding them through the period of danger. From this time on to the end of his life, writing was an instrument of which Paul made constant use. He probably wrote many letters which have been lost. His letters which have been preserved form a large part of the New Testament and are one of the chief sources of Christian truth.

Paul Taking Ship for Home. Acts 18:18-22. Paul spent a year and a half in Corinth. Then he sailed away for Syria taking with him Aquila and Priscilla, his two friends, who were tentmakers like himself and who had shared their home with him during his stay in Corinth. Paul's influence over these two friends had long since led them to accept Jesus as the Messiah and they were now among Paul's most efficient helpers.

Paul did not sail directly to Antioch. He landed at Ephesus, the great city which he had long had in mind as a favorable place for beginning a Christian church. On the Sabbath he preached in the Jewish synagogue of Ephesus and his message was so favorably received that the Jews asked him to remain longer with them. He had other plans in view, however, and told them that he must press on at once, but that he would come to them again, if God so willed it, at some later time. He left his two friends in Ephesus, however, and they carried on the work which he had begun. When Paul a little later reached Ephesus again, he found conditions favorable for starting a large work.

From Ephesus Paul sailed to Cæsarea. From that city he made a hasty trip to Jerusalem, just running up and saluting the church, and departing forthwith. Leaving Jerusalem he came down to Antioch, thus completing his second missionary journey of some two thousand five hundred miles.

The Letter to the Galatian Churches. While Paul was homeward bound, he had heard bad news concerning the

churches which he had planted and tended so carefully in Derbe, Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch of Pisidia. The Judaizers whom Paul had silenced in fair debate at the Council of Jerusalem were not convinced by Paul's arguments. They were determined to undo the work which Paul had accomplished. So they sent some of their number to visit the churches which Paul had organized in the cities which have been named. These people came among the Christians of the various churches, telling them that they had not been given the true gospel, that if they wished to be saved they must keep all the customs of the Jews. They told the people of Derbe and Lystra and of the other towns that Paul was no true apostle of Jesus, that he had never seen Jesus, and that his preaching was not in harmony with what Jesus had taught.

Of course, this led to division in the churches and to much confusion. Some of the members of these churches remained faithful to Paul. Many were persuaded that they had been misled. Others were confused and hardly knew what to believe. News of this situation having reached Paul, perhaps by a messenger, he was, of course, greatly concerned for the safety of the churches he had planted in Galatia and for the cause of Christ in that whole region. He determined to go to these churches as quickly as possible. This is probably why he refused to remain more than a few days in Ephesus and why his visit to Jerusalem was so hurried.

Somewhere on his journey, Paul wrote a letter to the churches of Galatia. He stoutly defended the gospel message which he had preached to them. He likewise defended his right to be considered an apostle of Jesus. He told the Christians of the Galatian churches that it was not he but the Judaizers who were perverting the gospel of Christ. He reproved them warmly for their fickleness and said that their conduct was foolish. He pleaded with them to maintain their freedom in Christ and not to be entangled again in the yoke of bondage.

The Lesson Prayer

O God, our Father, thou art the Giver of life, and thou canst make our lives great and useful. Thou canst help

us to overcome our imperfections. Thou canst make us to be like the heroic men and women of history who have understood the truth and stood for the truth against all opposition. Thou canst help us to become like Jesus, thy Son. We ask thee to help us to be diligent in school, kind and obedient in our homes, and faithful in our work for thy Church. Guide our lives that we may serve thee in youth and in maturity. We ask in the name of thy Son. Amen.

SUPPLEMENTAL MISSIONARY STORY

"The Island Beacon Fires." "The Book of Missionary Heroes," page 72.

EXPRESSIONAL SESSION

GREAT PERSONALITIES AT THE CRISES OF HISTORY

Gal. 5:13-26

Our Scripture lesson is a part of the letter which Paul wrote to the Christians of the Galatian churches at the time when they were being troubled by the teachings of the Judaizers. It was a critical time, not only for the Galatian churches but for the whole Church of Christ. The Judaizers had evidently grown in numbers in the Jerusalem church. They were seeking to make the Christians conform everywhere to the Jewish customs. If they had succeeded, Christianity would have been greatly hindered and its spread over the Roman Empire would have been long delayed. At the great crises of history God has usually had some great-souled person ready to save his cause from defeat. Paul was the one whom God had chosen for the crisis which had now come in the Church. In the Council of Jerusalem and during the years which followed that gathering Paul waged a long, hard battle against great odds. He was fighting for a great cause. He was defending the true gospel of Christ against a false gospel which sought to displace it. In this session we are to consider how God has used certain great-souled people in these times when his plans have seemed to be in danger.

Some Truths from the Lessons We Have Been Studying

Paul had been diligent in school. He had passed through deep religious experiences. He had thrown himself into his work with all his might. He had been building a strong character which made him fit to be used of God in matters of great importance.

Although Paul became greatly discouraged, he did not yield to discouragement. He kept right on working at his task when everything seemed to be going wrong.

Paul made his friendships count for Christ. He won his fellow tentmakers for the Christian religion.

Paul was a great preacher, but he used other means besides preaching for bringing people into the Christian religion. He was always watching for an opportunity to say a word for his Master.

Review Questions

1. Tell of Paul's experiences in Thessalonica.
2. What success did the missionaries have in Berea?
3. What kind of city was Athens?
4. Tell of Paul's experiences in Athens.
5. Why was Paul discouraged as he left Athens for Corinth?
6. What resolution did Paul make as to the nature of his preaching in the future?
7. How did Paul regain his courage?
8. Tell of Paul's experiences in Corinth.
9. What letters did Paul write from Corinth and why did he write them?
10. Tell of Paul's journey from Corinth to Antioch of Syria.

Bible Verses

Psalms 15; 37:37; 49:14; 51:6; 84:11; 140:13; Prov. 2:21; 11:14, 20; 12:19; Mal. 2:6; I Tim. 3:15.

Study Topics

1. Nehemiah, a Strong and Courageous Leader. Neh., ch. 4.

2. God's Vain Search for a Man. Ezek. 22:30.
3. The Change in Peter Due to His Fellowship with Jesus.
4. How God Trained Abraham Lincoln for His Life Work.
5. Qualities Essential to a Strong and Righteous Character.
6. Martin Luther and the Reformation. (See any good Church History.)
7. Paul's First Letter to the Thessalonians. (Have some pupil read the letter and give some of its chief thoughts.)
8. Paul's Second Letter to the Thessalonians.
9. Paul's Letter to the Galatian Churches.
10. Youthful Habits Which Hinder Usefulness in After Life.

The Lesson Truth Expressed in a Law

The Law of Strong and Righteous Character. There is nothing in life more valuable than character. Therefore:

1. We will seek to know what constitutes strong and righteous character. We will study the lives of people who have lived worthily, serving humanity and honoring God.
2. We will seek to understand how we ought to act and how we ought to feel in various circumstances. With this end in view, we will study the standards of character seen in the great men and women of the Bible and especially manifest in the character of Jesus. We will try to think and to act as Jesus would, if he were in our place.
3. We will seek to win and keep the friendship of all, but we will not do that which we know to be wrong in order to make or keep friends by such wrongdoing.

Projects for Putting the Lesson Truths Into Practice

Many crises will arise in the carrying on of the projects which the class has undertaken and even in the routine of the classroom work. A teacher in a week-day church

school once came to the church as usual but found all the pupils outside the building. When she asked them to come in, some of them refused. Some member of the class had taken offense at something which had been said or done and was seeking to break up the school. At this crisis a girl who was a real leader said: "Oh, come on in. Our teacher was not to blame for what happened, and why should we make her feel badly and hinder the work of the school?" That girl had the qualities which make great leaders in a time of crisis. The teacher should be on the watch to note and encourage these qualities which begin in the seemingly unimportant situations of childhood and youth, but which develop into that strength of personality which has characterized the great leaders of humanity.

The lessons studied furnish good material for overcoming any discouragement which may be manifested by members of the class with regard to the prosecution of the projects which have been undertaken.

CHAPTER XIII

BEGINNING THE THIRD MISSIONARY JOURNEY

WEEK DAY SESSION

A TOUR THROUGH THE UPPER COUNTRY TO EPHESUS

Acts 18:23-28; ch. 19

Paul made only a brief visit to his home church in Antioch. He must have had many stirring tales to tell of his wonderful twenty-five-hundred-mile journey. But he was anxious about the churches far away on the highlands of Galatia. He longed to be on the move again that he might pass through this "upper country" and establish his brethren in the faith. He had written to them, but he could not be sure just what effect his letter had produced. He knew that the only way to undo the mischief which the Judaizers had done was to make a personal visit to each church and explain matters face to face with those whom he had brought into the Christian faith.

Paul went about this task of rebuilding the half-torn-down congregation. He went at it vigorously and systematically. He visited the churches "in order." He was evidently highly successful in this undertaking and speedily put an end to the dissensions which the Judaizers had set on foot. Luke wrote that Paul established "all the disciples." The Judaizers were so thoroughly discredited that we hear no more of them in the region of Galatia, though they were to make serious trouble for Paul in other sections a little later.

Aquila and Priscilla Do Good Work in Ephesus. Acts 18:23-28. Paul's two friends, Aquila and Priscilla, whom he had left behind in Ephesus were busy spreading the news of the gospel in that city while Paul was completing his journey to Antioch of Syria and visiting the churches of Galatia. A certain Jew named Apollos who had been living in Alexandria came to Ephesus and met Aquila and Priscilla. Apollos was a very learned man. He had

heard something of the preaching of John the Baptist and had become a follower of that great preacher though he had never seen him. When Apollos came to Ephesus he went into the synagogue and taught the people about John the Baptist. Aquila and Priscilla heard Apollos and they took him and instructed him concerning the fulfillment of John's utterances in Jesus. Apollos had never heard of Jesus, but he accepted him at once as the Messiah concerning whose coming John the Baptist had spoken. Apollos decided to go across into Greece and the Christians in Ephesus encouraged him to do so. They wrote a letter to the Christians in Corinth asking them to receive Apollos. So it came to pass that Apollos came into the church which Paul had organized in Corinth and preached there.

Paul at Ephesus. Acts 19:1-7. Having passed through the regions of Galatia, Paul pushed on westward to Ephesus. He was now ready to begin work in that city and to undertake the carrying out of plans which he had long had in mind. He had not been in Ephesus long before he ran across some people who were professed followers of John the Baptist. These people had been baptized as converts to John's teaching, but they, like Apollos, had never heard about Jesus. Paul quickly explained to these people how Jesus had come and fulfilled all that John had said and how he was indeed, "the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world." Having accepted Jesus as their Saviour, these people were forthwith baptized in the name of Jesus and became members of his Church.

A Long Sojourn in Ephesus. Acts 19:8-10. It will be remembered that when Paul visited Ephesus on his way to Jerusalem, and preached in the synagogue there, the Jews asked him to remain with them for a while. So when Paul came back to Ephesus he went again to the synagogue and preached there every Sabbath. This continued for three months. At the end of that time strong opposition developed against Paul among the leaders of the synagogue. As these opponents were constantly hindering his work and speaking evil concerning the Christian religion, Paul decided to withdraw from the

synagogue. There was a school conducted by a certain teacher named Tyrannus and it was near the synagogue. Paul was invited to hold his services in this school building, so he gathered his converts there and taught them every day. For two years Paul was thus teaching daily and preaching continually in Ephesus.

Ephesus was a center of trade and many people gathered there to see its great temples and the famous idols within these temples. Paul had chosen Ephesus because he knew that it would be a center from which the whole province of Asia could be reached. During these two years of diligent labor, he practically accomplished his aims, for Luke says that "all they that dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks."

Overthrowing Superstition. Acts 19:11-20. Paul stayed longer in Ephesus than he had stayed in any city since beginning his missionary journeys from Antioch. He became well known in the city. He was able to perform miracles of healing. All sorts of superstitions abound among pagan peoples and this was especially true of Ephesus. Certain men who were Jews and the sons of a chief priest heard about Paul's miracles of healing. They learned that he cured demoniacs by pronouncing over them the name of Jesus. These sons of the priest did not profess to believe in Jesus but they tried to use the name of Jesus to cure demoniacs just as Paul had done. Their attempt ended disastrously for themselves, for the man they were attempting to heal attacked the two brothers who were trying to cure him. The power of the demoniac was so great that he mastered both men and they were glad to escape out of the house severely wounded and with most of their clothing torn from them.

This event made a profound impression on the people of Ephesus. They saw that Paul was healing people not by magic but by some greater and holier power. Many of them forthwith came forward as professed followers of Jesus. Many likewise brought their books which told about magical arts. Books were very expensive in those days, but there must have been, nevertheless, a great heap of these books of magic, for Luke tells us that some person was interested enough to count up what all the

books which were brought were worth, and it was found that they were worth fifty thousand pieces of silver, about eight thousand dollars in our money.

After the books were all piled up together, fire was applied to the great heap and a magnificent bonfire lighted up the streets of Ephesus. Paganism was crumbling before the light of Christianity. Luke says in his interesting way, "So mightily grew the word of the Lord and prevailed."

Longing for New and More Distant Fields of Labor. Acts 19:21, 22. Having been in Ephesus for two years, Paul began to grow restless again. He was longing to see once more the brethren in distant lands, longing, too, for the opportunity to carry the gospel into regions where it had never been preached before. With his usual care he mapped out a journey. He planned to cross over into Macedonia to visit the Christians in Philippi, Thessalonica, and Berea. From Macedonia he planned to go on south into Greece, visiting the Christians of Athens and Corinth. From Corinth he hoped to go to Jerusalem. He had hopes that after visiting Jerusalem he might sail away to Rome and there preach the gospel of Jesus in the great capital of the world.

Paul was not able to begin this journey as soon as he had expected. On the contrary, he remained in Ephesus for a considerable time and sent his helpers Timothy and Erastus into Macedonia. Luke does not tell us why Paul decided to remain a while longer in Ephesus, but Paul tells us in a letter which he wrote to the Christians in Corinth at about this time. He says, "But I will tarry at Ephesus until Pentecost; for a great door and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries." Paul, therefore, had two reasons for staying a while longer in Ephesus. The first was the great opportunity offered for Christian work in that city. The second was the fact that there were many opponents there and he felt that he ought to stay and fight it out rather than go away and leave the battle to his fellow Christians.

The First Epistle to the Corinthians. During his stay in Ephesus Paul heard bad news concerning the church in Corinth. The Christians there had divided into un-

friendly factions. Some of them claimed to be followers of Paul. Others called themselves followers of Apollos. The Corinthian Christians had not entirely broken away from the sinful ways which were so common among the pagans. There had been quarreling among them and they had sued one another in the courts. There were Judaizers in the Corinthian church who were continually stirring up trouble because some of the Christians bought meat which had been offered to idols and used it for food.

It may be that some of the Judaizers from Jerusalem had found their way to Corinth. Some persons there had been gossiping about Paul. They had said that he was no apostle, that he was a vain and boastful sort of person, and that he was avariciously trying to gain riches and honor for himself. The assertion that Paul was avaricious was especially scandalous since he had worked as a tentmaker to support himself while in Corinth. Gossips of that day had small regard for the facts, however, and it is the same with gossips to-day.

It was especially distressing to Paul to learn that some of those who professed to be Christians were making the Lord's Supper a kind of pagan feast. Certain persons had even appeared at the Lord's table intoxicated. It was enough to make Paul sad and discouraged to hear these reports concerning the church where he had labored so hard for more than a year and a half. But he spent no time mourning over matters. He wrote to the church, trying earnestly to set the erring Christians right; he sent some of his helpers to Corinth and planned to visit the city himself as soon as he could.

A Riot in Ephesus Brings Paul's Work There to a Close. Acts 19:23-41. Paul had so far won out over the Jews of Ephesus that they were no longer able to give him much trouble. He had won the friendship of some of the leading people of the city and of the officials who ruled the city under the Romans. It was an uprising of the Gentiles which finally caused Paul to withdraw from the city. There was a great temple of Diana in Ephesus, containing a magnificent statue of the goddess. Many visitors came to Ephesus to see this temple and the statue of Diana. Certain Ephesians made great profit

through manufacturing little images of the goddess Diana which they sold to these visitors.

These sellers of images were keen enough to see that if Christianity continued to grow in Ephesus and throughout the surrounding region, it would in time put a stop to their business. So under the leadership of a silversmith named Demetrius they raised a great uproar against Paul and the Christians. They seized two of Paul's helpers, Gaius and Aristarchus, and dragged them into the theater.

Having heard what was going on, Paul determined to go out and face the mob, but his companions would not let him do so. Some of the city officials also sent word asking Paul to keep under cover. After the mob had howled for some two hours, the town clerk succeeded in making himself heard and in a masterful way he caused the mob to disband and the people to go to their homes. Believing that his continued presence in the city would now do more harm than good, Paul prepared to leave Ephesus at once.

Suggestions for Notebook Work

Trace on the notebook maps Paul's journey from Athens to Corinth, to Ephesus, to Cæsarea, to Jerusalem, to Antioch of Syria, where the second missionary journey ended. Trace his third missionary tour from Antioch of Syria to Derbe, Lystra, Iconium, Antioch of Pisidia and thence to Ephesus. Add to the Chronological Table of Paul's Life the following items:

From Antioch Through the "Upper Country," A. D. 52.

The Long Sojourn in Ephesus, A. D. 52–55.

Picture: St. Paul Preaching at Ephesus, by Le Sueur, No. 449.

SUNDAY SESSION

THROUGH MACEDONIA TO CORINTH AND BACK THROUGH MACEDONIA TO TROAS

Acts 20:1-12; Rom. 1:1-17

The riot in Ephesus had brought about a situation wherein Paul's continued presence in the city was likely to cause a great deal of disturbance and to produce more harm than good. Paul had often faced dangers far more grave than now threatened him in Ephesus. He had friends among the officials of the city and there were many Christians in Ephesus so it is not likely that his enemies could have done him personal violence. But Paul was not stubborn in his dealings with his opponents. He was willing to face death for the good of the cause he loved or he was willing to run away for the good of the same cause. He thought the matter over and decided it would be best for him to leave. He had long hoped to visit again the churches he had established in Macedonia and in Greece and now the time to carry out these plans seemed to have arrived.

Paul Visits the Churches of Macedonia. Acts 20:1, 2. After the uproar of the riot had ceased and the people had dispersed to their homes, Paul called together some of his Christian brethren and told them of his determination to depart from the city at once. He exhorted them to remain faithful to the cause of Christ and then bade them good-by. Paul probably traveled from Ephesus to Troas by land and from that seaport departed for Philippi by ship. From Philippi he retraced the course of his previous journey over the Egnatian Way to Thessalonica and Berea. Luke sums up this visit of Paul to the Macedonian churches with the brief statement that Paul gave them "much exhortation." Paul's intention on this trip was to establish the Christians in the religion of Jesus rather than to win new converts to the faith.

Three Months in Greece. Acts 20:3. From Macedonia Paul went on into Greece where he spent three months visiting the churches and exhorting the Christians to be faithful and teaching them more perfectly what it means to be a follower of Jesus. He probably

visited the Christians who were in Athens. It may be that by this time a church had been established there. We know that a Christian church had sprung up in Cenchreæ not far from Corinth and there may have been many of these new churches which had grown out of the work of the church in Corinth. Doubtless most of the three months was spent in Corinth. Paul was anxious to correct the errors and divisions which had crept into the Corinthian church during his absence and concerning which he had written to the Corinthian Christians.

When Paul was about to set sail for Syria and his home church in Antioch, it was discovered that his enemies had laid a plot to kill him. It will be remembered that during his first visit to Corinth the enemies of Paul had seized him and brought him before the Roman proconsul, Gallio. Their attempt to discredit Paul and to harm him on that occasion had returned upon their own heads, for they had been driven from the court room, mobbed by the Gentile multitudes, and their leader had been severely beaten. We need not be surprised, therefore, to learn that on this occasion the enemies of Paul made no attempt to have him brought to trial before the Roman proconsul. They plotted secretly to kill him. This plot was doubtless to be carried out on board the ship which was to carry Paul to Syria. The cunning plotters laid their plans to kill Paul beyond the domains of Gallio and upon the high seas. Having learned of this plot against his life, Paul foiled his enemies by changing his plans. He determined to return by land through Macedonia rather than by sea direct to Syria.

Another Visit to the Churches of Macedonia. Acts 20:5, 6. Paul was thus enabled to visit the churches of Macedonia which he had visited only about three months before. Paul now had with him a considerable company of people. At least seven helpers were with him on this journey through Macedonia. These helpers were Sopater, of Berea, Aristarchus and Secundus, of Thessalonica, Gaius, of Derbe, Tychicus and Trophimus, of Asia, and Timothy, of Lystra. We see from this that Paul was gathering a corps of workers out of the various churches which he had organized.

As the party came near to Philippi, Paul sent all of his helpers on across the sea to Troas while he alone went on into that city. At Philippi, Paul again met Luke, who had evidently been in that city ever since Paul's first visit there. Luke now joined Paul and they set sail for Troas. They must have run into contrary winds for it took them five days to cover the distance between Neapolis, the seaport of Philippi, and Troas. They had covered the same distance on their first missionary journey in less than two days. At Troas, Paul and Luke joined the other seven men who had gone on ahead and the nine men then tarried in Troas seven days, preaching and teaching and helping the Christians to organize more fully the church which had grown up there.

An All-Night Meeting in Troas. Acts 20:7-12. Luke recounts one incident of the period spent by the missionary party in Troas. This account is interesting not only because of the events described but also because of what it suggests as to the methods of the missionaries and the conditions under which they labored. On Sunday evening there was a kind of farewell meeting, as Paul planned to depart with his companions early Monday morning. The meeting was held in an upper chamber. There must have been a considerable company of people, if the chamber was at all large, for the room was so crowded that some of the people had to sit in the windows. So intensely interested were both the listeners of Paul and Paul himself that the meeting kept right on until midnight. It might have continued longer if an interruption had not occurred. A certain lad named Eutychus was sitting in one of the windows. He became sleepy because of the lateness of the hour and because of the condition of the atmosphere, which had become oppressive due to the many lights in the room and the large number of people gathered there. This lad fell asleep and dropped out of the window. As the congregation rushed down and lifted up the boy, he was thought to be dead, but Paul asked the relatives and friends not to make any ado, telling them that the boy was alive.

The congregation then went back to the upper room and the meeting was resumed. They partook of the

communion of the Lord's Supper and afterward Paul talked with the people until the break of day. As he bade the people good-by, some of them brought forth the lad who had fallen out of the window. He was now so far recovered that he could walk with some assistance and all the people were glad.

Letters Written by Paul During That Part of His Journey Which We Have Studied in This Lesson

Paul had begun to write to various churches some time before the events which have been studied in this lesson. During his first sojourn in Corinth he had written his two letters to the Thessalonians. A little later, probably on a ship bound from Corinth to Ephesus, he wrote his Epistle to the Galatians. Coming again to Ephesus to take up what proved to be a two-years' residence there he wrote his first letter to the Corinthians. During the time studied in this lesson he wrote two more letters.

The Second Epistle to the Corinthians. After writing the First Epistle to the Corinthians, Paul sent Titus to Corinth as his personal representative, hoping that this young helper of his might be able to straighten out the snarls which had developed. Paul had directed Titus to join him at Troas but when he reached that city from Ephesus, Titus did not appear. Paul was again much discouraged just as he had been when he first came to Corinth. He was alone in Troas. He had been compelled to flee from Ephesus and the work he had begun there seemed in grave danger. He had hoped to meet Titus in Troas and to learn of the results of his visit to the Corinthian church. He knew that the cause of Christ in Corinth was in great peril and the prolonged stay of Titus seemed to be an omen of impending disasters. The intense anxiety of Paul was relieved when Titus finally joined him somewhere in Macedonia. Paul forthwith wrote another letter to the Corinthians, sending Titus back to Corinth with it. Titus had reported the complete success of his mission and the gladdened spirit of Paul is very evident in the letter which he wrote after the coming of Titus.

The Epistle to the Romans. After reaching Corinth on the trip which we have been studying in this lesson, Paul wrote one of the greatest of his epistles. Up to this time, so far as we know, he had written only to churches where he had been and which he had established himself. In Corinth he wrote to the Christians in Rome. Paul had never been in Rome at the time, so far as we know, but he was longing to go there and he had many acquaintances there.

In this letter Paul went deeply into the great truths of the Christian religion. In it Paul has shown himself to be one of the greatest thinkers the world has even known. His work is all the more remarkable when we consider that Paul was not a person who lived apart from men as many of the great thinkers of the world have done. He wrote this greatest of his epistles in the midst of busy days. No such material as that contained in the Epistle to the Romans can be produced, however, without prolonged and deep meditation. It may be that the substance of the epistle took form in Paul's mind during the three lonely years he spent in the wilderness of Arabia, and that it had been growing within his consciousness during all the years of toil and struggle.

The Lesson Prayer

We give thee thanks, our Father in heaven, for the lessons contained in the Bible. We thank thee for the story of Jesus and for the stories concerning his consecrated followers who endured hardships and underwent prolonged labors for the cause of Christ. Impress upon our minds the lessons contained in these noble lives. Help us to see how faithful and diligent these servants of Jesus were. Give us hearts that are willing to follow the example they have left to us. Teach us to love hard work, because it is one of the greatest of thy instruments for overcoming evil and establishing righteousness in the earth. We ask in the name of Jesus, thy Son. Amen.

Supplemental Missionary Story

"Kapiolani, the Heroine of Hawaii." "The Book of Missionary Heroes," page 86.

EXPRESSIONAL SESSION

THE PLACE OF DILIGENCE IN A GREAT AND USEFUL LIFE

Matt. 25:14-30

Our Scripture lesson is one of the great parables of Jesus. This parable has many lessons, but we are to study it now with the aim of learning what it has to teach us concerning the necessity for diligence. The man who received five talents and the man who received two both did something with the money they received. Perhaps the two-talent man worked as hard as the five-talent man and therefore he received the same commendation: "Well done, good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will set thee over many things; enter thou into the joy of thy lord."

The man who received one talent was not a diligent servant. He was honest enough in a certain way, for he kept his Lord's money safe. He had persuaded himself that the safest thing to do was to bury the money he had received. He said he did this because he knew his master to be a hard man. He said that he was afraid to risk using the money. He may have believed what he said, for people are often self-deceived. The master, however, knew the real reason. He knew that this servant had not hidden the money because he was afraid that he might lose it in buying and selling, but because he had a distaste for diligent labor. This is seen in the master's words, "Thou wicked and slothful servant." His wickedness and his slothfulness were closely related.

Among the people who have lived truly great and useful lives, there have been great differences in disposition and in habits. One habit has, however, been common to all. They have all been great workers. Some people have lived great and useful lives in spite of certain grave imperfections of character, but no person has ever so lived while indulging in laziness. Great life accomplishments are more largely and more often due to hard work than to genius.

Some Truths from the Lessons We Have Been Studying

Paul did not let his feelings hinder his habits of diligence. He worked right on just the same whether he was discouraged almost to the point of despair or bubbling over with joyful enthusiasm.

Diligence is contagious. All who became associated with Paul seemed to put new vigor into what they did because of their contact with the great apostle.

Paul practiced what he preached. He told young Timothy to give himself wholly to his tasks. He was only asking Timothy to do what he did himself.

If Paul had been governed by his moods, he could never have accomplished his great task. Suppose that he had written or preached only when he felt just right. The needs of the situation and not his own moods governed the matter. He wrote to the Corinthians when he was deeply discouraged because he believed a letter from him might help them and he wrote to them when he was made glad by the coming of Titus because he believed that another letter was needed.

Review Questions

1. Tell of Paul's visit to the churches of Galatia.
2. Who were Aquila and Priscilla and how did they help Paul?
3. Tell of some events which took place during Paul's long sojourn in Ephesus.
4. Why did Paul write his first letter to the Corinthians and from what city was it written?
5. Tell of the riot in the city of Ephesus.
6. Tell of Paul's trip through Macedonia.
7. Tell of the plot against Paul's life in Corinth.
8. Name some of Paul's helpers who accompanied him on the trip from Corinth through Macedonia to Troas.
9. Where and for what purpose did Paul write the Second Epistle to the Corinthians?
10. Where and for what purpose was the letter to the Romans written?

Bible Verses

Ex. 15:26; Deut. 4:9; 6:6-9; Josh. 1:7-9; Ezra 7:23; Prov. 10:4; 22:29; Zech. 6:15; Heb. 6:11, 12; II Peter 3-14.

Study Topics

1. The Diligence of Jesus Shown by a Day in His Life. Mark 1:21-35.
2. Events in Paul's Life Which Show His Diligence.
3. The Diligent Pursuit of Wisdom. Prov. 2:1-5.
4. A Picture of Christian Character Drawn by the Pen of Paul. Rom. 12:9-21.
5. Does a Task Become More Interesting if a Person Works at It Diligently?
6. A Great Inventor Who Worked at His Task Diligently. (See a life of Eli Whitney.)
7. A Great Author Who Worked Diligently. (See a life of Sir Walter Scott.)
8. The Diligence of a Great Missionary. (See a life of Livingstone.)
9. Why We Should Be as Diligent in Our Church School Tasks as in Our Public School Tasks.
10. The Diligence of God as Shown in His Acts of Creation and in His Works of Redemption. (For the pastor.)

The Lesson Truth Expressed in a Law

The Law of Diligence. No task of much importance is ever accomplished without diligent labor. Therefore:

1. We will be diligent in our studies both in the church school and in the school where we receive instruction in the secular branches.
2. We will be diligent in the tasks to which we are assigned by our parents or others in authority over us, knowing that by diligence in small undertakings we develop a habit which will be most helpful in great undertakings.
3. We will strive diligently after that righteous and strong character which is developed in those who are the true and faithful followers of Jesus.

Projects for Putting the Lesson Truths Into Practice

The prolonged and successful pursuit of almost any project will tend to develop the habit of diligence. There is grave danger that project work, however, may develop qualities of character exactly opposite to diligence, if it is undertaken and pursued in a half-hearted way. The teacher should take care to see that every project is either carried out diligently or exchanged for some other undertaking which can be given more enthusiastic effort.

A good project for the class to undertake at this time might be summed up in the title, "Diligent Preparation of Church School Lessons for One Month." If the teacher can persuade every member of the class to undertake this project with interest it will be found to be an accomplishment well worth while. Have pupils set apart an amount of time for the preparation of church-school lessons which corresponds with the amount of time used in the preparation of public-school lessons of like length and character. Lead pupils to note the difference which diligent preparation makes in the class recitations and in their personal interest in the subjects studied.

CHAPTER XIV

COMPLETION OF THE THIRD MISSIONARY JOURNEY

WEEK DAY SESSION

FROM TROAS TO JERUSALEM

Acts 20:13-38; 21:1-16

We have seen that Paul was a man of great intellectual power. Such people are sometimes of a disposition which makes it difficult to become well acquainted with them. Their greatness of intellect seems to lift them above their fellow men, rendering any intimacies with them hard to attain. This was not at all true of Paul. If we catch the message of this lesson, we shall see that he was one of the most friendly and approachable of men.

A Twenty-Mile Walk. Acts 20:13-16. Paul must have been a man of no mean physical strength. After preaching all night in Troas, he told his companions to go aboard a ship bound southward along the coast. He told them that he was going to proceed on foot and meet the ship at Assos, twenty miles down the coast. He estimated that he could be there as soon as the ship, since the road ran directly to Assos while the ship would have to sail around a cape extending some miles out to sea. Perhaps Paul wished a little time for meditation and expected to find opportunity for thinking as he walked along the highway that led from Troas to Assos.

Having taken Paul on board at Assos, the ship sailed on to Mitylene, a city of some size lying upon the island of Lesbos. Sailing away from Mitylene, the ship the next day brought the travelers within sight of the island of Chios lying toward the westward. Without making a landing on the island of Chios the travelers proceeded on southward through the night and the following day tied up for a little while at some port of the island of Samos. Another night's sailing brought the ship to the docks of Miletus.

A Tender Farewell to the Ephesian Elders. Acts 20:17-36. Miletus was only thirty-six miles from Ephesus, but Paul had made up his mind not to visit that city on the journey he was then pursuing. He was anxious to be in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost and feared that a visit to Ephesus would be necessarily so prolonged that he would fail to reach Jerusalem at the desired date. He wished to meet his friends of Ephesus again, especially the officers of the church which he had organized there and in which he had labored for two or three years. So he sent word to the elders of the church in Ephesus to come down to Miletus to meet him.

Paul's words to these elders of the Ephesian church show us the great and unselfish tenderness of his nature. He opened his heart to these Christian brethren, telling them of his anxiety concerning the future of the work in Ephesus and earnestly admonishing them to tend faithfully the little flock over which God had made them the shepherds. He spoke of the uncertainties in his own immediate future and predicted that his Ephesian friends were looking upon his face for the last time. With earnest words he commended them to God's care.

Then they all knelt down and Paul led the company in prayer. It was a touching farewell; strong men wept and throwing their arms about the neck of their beloved leader they kissed him fondly. Paul's prediction that the parting there on the beach was to be final, in so far as the present life is concerned, almost broke the hearts of his Ephesian friends. The world had hardly witnessed such a scene before as it witnessed that day on the beach of Miletus. There was Paul, a Jew and an ex-Pharisee, with him as his traveling companions were men from Macedonia and from various parts of Asia. One of them, Timothy, was half Jew, half Greek. There were a group of men who only a few years before had been pagan idol worshipers, but who were now the elders of a Christian church in Ephesus. Of widely different races and from different provinces, these people had become one brotherhood in Christ. The little company from Ephesus accompanied Paul and his companions to the ship and doubtless watched it as it moved away across the water.

From Miletus to Tyre. Acts 21:1-6. The ship sailed southward from Miletus and came on a straight course to the island of Cos. The following day the travelers touched land on the large island of Rhodes. Thence sailing eastward the ship came to anchor in the harbor of Patara, a city of considerable importance situated in the midst of the shifting sand dunes of the Lycian coast. Here the missionaries left the ship on which they had been traveling and went aboard another ship bound for Phœnicia. For a little way the course of the vessel lay along the Lycian shore; then the ship struck boldly seaward. The last trace of land disappeared and only the tossing waves lay about the vessel. Presently, however, dim mountain peaks began to appear in the southeast. They had come in sight of Cyprus, the island in which Paul and Barnabas had begun their labors on their first missionary journey more than ten years before. Again they lost sight of land as the vessel drew away from the island of Cyprus. In due time the ship cast anchor in the roadstead of Tyre and the travelers disembarked.

There were Christians in Tyre and Paul and his companions took the trouble to find them. The party spent seven days in the city of Tyre. The Christians of Tyre had probably never seen Paul before, but in the week which he spent among them he made himself beloved among them. These new-found friends begged Paul not to go to Jerusalem. They probably knew of the bitter hatred against Paul in that city.

The seven days' delay in Tyre had been necessary because it took the ship that long to discharge her cargo, but Paul and his helpers had made good use of the time. When the time came for Paul's party to part from their Christian friends of Tyre, the Tyrian Christians, men, women, and children went with them to the shore. There they all knelt down together on the beach, and thus they prayed and bade each other farewell. Paul and his companions then went aboard the ship while the Christians of Tyre turned homeward.

From Tyre to Cæsarea. Acts 21:7-14. Sailing south from Tyre, the ship drew near to the city of Ptolemais, a city which now bears the name of Acre. Paul and his

companions were now coming within sight of the Holy Land. To the eastward the Lebanon Mountains were in view and the snowy crest of Mount Hermon. Eight miles south of Ptolemais, the long ridge of Mount Carmel rose against the sky line.

There were Christians in Ptolemais. The ship stopped there one day and Paul had an opportunity to meet the Christian people of the city. From Ptolemais the ship proceeded to Cæsarea, where the missionaries took leave of her to proceed by land to Jerusalem. Philip, who had been one of the first deacons of the Christian church in Jerusalem and who had done such successful evangelistic work in Samaria and elsewhere, had been living in Cæsarea for many years and he kindly invited the missionaries to make their home with him while they remained in Cæsarea. Philip had ceased to be a traveling evangelist, perhaps because he had married and now had four children, daughters who, like their father, were zealous workers for the Christian religion.

While the party tarried in Cæsarea, a prophet named Agabus came down from Judea. This was the same prophet who had predicted the famine a good many years before and whose predictions had come true. Agabus took Paul's girdle and bound his own hands and feet, at the same time predicting that the Jews of Jerusalem would so bind the man who owned the girdle and that they would deliver him thus bound into the hands of the Gentiles. When Paul's traveling companions heard this, they begged of him not to go on to Jerusalem. The Christians of Cæsarea likewise joined in the plea. Paul said to them, "What do ye, weeping and breaking my heart? for I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus." His friends seeing that he could not be turned from his purpose ceased to urge him and said, "The will of the Lord be done."

Up to Jerusalem. Acts 20:15, 16. So the whole party took up their baggage and proceeded to Jerusalem. A number of the Christians of Cæsarea accompanied Paul and his companions. A certain man named Mnason, who was a native of Cyprus and who owned a house in

Jerusalem, also went with the party. He invited the missionaries to come to his house and to make it their dwelling place while they were in Jerusalem.

Suggestions for Notebook Work

Trace on the notebook maps Paul's journey from Ephesus to Troas, to Philippi, through Thessalonica and Berea to Athens and Corinth; then back over the same route to Troas. Trace out the sea voyage from Troas to Assos, to Mitylene, past Chios, to Samos, to Miletus, to Cos, to Rhodes, to Patara, past Cyprus on the south side of the island, to Tyre, to Ptolemais, to Cæsarea, to Jerusalem.

Add to the Chronological Table of Paul's Life the following items:

Journey Through Macedonia to Corinth, Autumn of A. D. 55.

Three Months in Greece, A. D. 55-56.

Arrives in Jerusalem, End of Third Missionary Journey, Summer of A. D. 56.

Picture: Paul Parting with the Elders at Miletus, No. 767.

SUNDAY SESSION

MOBBED IN THE CITY OF JERUSALEM

Acts 21:17-40; ch. 22; 23:1-11

Paul's arrival in Jerusalem may be regarded as the end of his third missionary journey. He had wished to go to his home church in Antioch after visiting Jerusalem, but we shall see that events occurred which caused this plan to miscarry. The missionary journeys had grown constantly longer, as regards the distance traveled. This third journey had covered more than three thousand miles. It had likewise occupied more time than any previous journey. When Paul reached Jerusalem, he had been absent from Antioch for about four years.

The Missionaries Received Gladly by the Apostles and Elders of Jerusalem. Acts 21:17-26. Paul and his helpers received a warm welcome from the Christians of

Jerusalem. The day after their arrival they were taken to see James, the brother of Jesus, who had become the chief man in the Jerusalem church and who was highly respected even among the priests and Pharisees. When the missionaries came into the room where they were to meet James, they found all the elders of the Jerusalem church assembled.

Paul told James and the elders about his work among the Gentiles and they were glad, giving God thanks for so great a work. Then James and the elders told Paul about the growth of the Church in Jerusalem and Judea. They told him that there were now thousands of Jews who believed in Jesus and who yet continued to observe all the customs which had been taught by Moses and the rabbis. They informed Paul that these Christian Jews had been told certain things concerning the work he was doing among the Gentiles. Jews visiting Jerusalem to attend the great feast days and coming from places like Iconium, Thessalonica, and Ephesus had been talking to their relatives and friends in Jerusalem, telling them about Paul's work in the regions from which they came. They had reported that Paul was teaching Jews everywhere to forsake the customs of the Jewish religion.

James and the elders were big enough men to appreciate the greatness of the work which Paul was doing and rejoice in it, but they feared that there would be misunderstanding on the part of some of the Jewish Christians, especially among those who had been Pharisees. The leaders of the Jerusalem church suggested a plan whereby Paul should show to all the Jewish Christians that he was not an enemy to the Law of Moses and the Jewish customs which had grown out of that Law. The Jewish customs demanded that when anyone had made a vow he should make certain offerings in the Temple and should perform certain other acts such as repeated washings of his hands or having the hair shaved from his head. There was considerable expense involved in carrying out such ceremonies, since the person who had taken the vow and was confirming it must pay various fees to the priests and make offerings for the support of the Temple worship.

The leaders of the Jerusalem church told Paul that there were just then in the city four men who had made vows. They suggested that Paul pay the expenses connected with the ceremonial proceedings of the four men and that he should go through the performance with them. Paul had long since ceased to believe that such things had any large religious value, but he was willing to do what the elders had suggested if by so doing he could win the confidence of his fellow Christians who were suspicious concerning his aims and his methods. So Paul did as the elders had suggested.

Seized by a Mob. Acts 21:27-40. The ceremonial performances which Paul had undertaken required seven days for their fulfillment. The time was almost completed when Paul's enemies suddenly brought the matter to an end by assaulting him in the Temple. Paul had made many enemies. He had to make them or give up the great task to which God had called him. He had enemies among those who clung to the Jewish religion and rejected Christianity. He had enemies among the Gentiles who did not care about religion, but who had learned that Paul's preaching interfered with their business and their profits. He had enemies within the Church, the Judaizers who denounced him as a false apostle and a dangerous disturber of sacred customs. Perhaps his most bitter enemies were among the Jews in such cities as Ephesus, Iconium, and Thessalonica. It was this last-named group of enemies that attacked Paul in the Temple. These Jews were in Jerusalem to attend the great festivals. Some of them saw Paul and recognized him as the fearless preacher who had made such a disturbance in various synagogues in distant lands. These Jews of the Dispersion stirred up the multitudes and rushed upon Paul crying out, "Men of Israel, help: This is the man that teacheth all men everywhere against the people, and the law, and this place; and moreover he brought Greeks also into the temple, and hath defiled this holy place." The mob dragged Paul from the Temple court out into the streets. Paul's enemies were beating him and trying to kill him, but there were so many of them that they got in each other's way. They soon

would have made an end of him, however, if the chief captain of the Roman garrison had not come running with a detachment of soldiers. When Paul's enemies saw the soldiers coming, they stopped beating him and drew back from the advancing spears. The Roman captain, thinking that Paul must be some noted criminal, ordered the soldiers to seize him and bind him with two chains. Then the Roman captain turned to the crowd and asked them who Paul was and what he had done. Some in the crowd shouted one thing and some another and there was such an uproar that the Roman officer could not find out anything definite. So he ordered Paul to be brought into the Castle of Antonia. When Paul's assailants saw their intended victim being taken away they surged around the Roman soldiers crying, "Away with him." The group of soldiers lifted Paul above the eager hands which were reaching for him and so they brought him to the castle stairs.

As the soldiers were about to bring Paul into the castle, Paul said to the captain, "May I say something unto thee?" The Roman captain was surprised to hear Paul speak to him in the Greek language. He had concluded that Paul was a noted Egyptian desperado who had caused a great deal of trouble in the country. Paul assured the captain that he was a Jew from Tarsus, in Cilicia, and that he had come from "no mean city." Paul asked the captain if he might speak to the people, and the captain gave him leave. So Paul stood on the castle stairs and turned his face toward the great surging throng of wildly excited, shouting men who were crying out for his immediate destruction. Paul raised his hand with that commanding gesture which had often stilled angry multitudes. Gradually the uproar died down until there was silence. Then Paul began to speak.

Paul's Address from the Castle Stairs. Acts 22:1-21. When the multitudes heard Paul speaking to them in their native Hebrew tongue, they became the more attentive. Paul began by telling them that he was a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, and that he had spent some of his early years in Jerusalem as a pupil of Gamaliel. He told how he had persecuted the Christians. He told of his

journey to Damascus to seize the Christians in that city that he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. Then he told about his conversion and his subsequent experiences in Damascus. He was telling them about how God had commissioned him to go far hence to the Gentiles, when the mob suddenly broke out into a wild uproar. It was the fact that Paul was preaching to Gentiles and receiving them into the Christian fellowship that specially roused the hatred of Paul's enemies and when they heard him declare that God had given him this very task they would hear no more.

Paul Saved from Cruel Scourging by His Roman Citizenship. Acts 22:22-30. The mob had broken out more furiously than before. Fierce cries rent the air, "Away with such a fellow from the earth: for it is not fit that he should live." The mob-maddened assailants of Paul threw aside their garments and cast handfuls of dust into the air, and there was a fearful uproar. The Roman captain was at a loss to understand why the mob was so violent in its determination to destroy Paul. He thought that Paul must have committed some great crime. It was the cruel custom of the times to flog a suspected criminal until he confessed his guilt. The Roman captain determined to use this method with Paul. He ordered him to "be examined by scourging." So the soldiers laid hold on Paul and dragged him to the whipping post within the court of the castle. They tied his hands with strong leather thongs, having taken off his garments so as to expose his naked back. A Roman centurion took his place so as to oversee the whipping and to be ready to

receive Paul's confession. Two Roman soldiers came forward and took their places one on each side of Paul as he hung there on the post, his hands stretched high above his head and his back laid bare to receive the cruel lashing. Each soldier was armed with a Roman scourge, a kind of whip with a handle eighteen inches long and a dozen lashes, each lash loaded with sharp bits of metal. The centurion was about to give the command for the soldiers to lay on with their whips when Paul calmly said to him, "Is it lawful for you to scourge a man that is a Roman, and uncondemned?" Hearing these words, the centurion hastened away to the chief captain and said to him, "What art thou about to do? for this man is a Roman." The chief captain came hastily to Paul and said, "Tell me, art thou a Roman?" Paul answered "Yea." Hearing this, the chief captain ordered Paul to be untied. He was now very much frightened because he had bound Paul, since Roman law provided that no Roman citizen should be subjected to such indignity.

The next day the chief captain called together the chief priests and the members of the Jewish court known as the sanhedrin. Having assembled these Jewish leaders, he brought Paul before them that he might find out what charge the Jews would lodge against the prisoner.

The Examination Before the Jewish Leaders. Acts 23:1-10. When Paul stood before the priests and the members of the sanhedrin, he looked them squarely in the face and said, "Brethren, I have lived before God in all good conscience until this day." This was simply a statement from Paul declaring that he had acted conscientiously in all that he had done in becoming a follower of Jesus and in preaching the gospel to the Gentiles. However, it greatly angered the high priest, Ananias. He commanded those who were standing near Paul to smite him on the mouth. Paul had a perfect right to say what he did and the high priest had no right at all to command that Paul be smitten. These high officials had a habit, it seems, of committing such shameful indignities upon those whom they accused before their court. They had smitten Jesus under similar circumstances. Paul did not have the splendid self-control

of his Master. He was a man of quick temper and he said to the high priest, "God shall smite thee, thou whited wall: and sittest thou to judge me according to the law, and commandest me to be smitten contrary to the law?" It may be that Paul did not know that Ananias was the high priest, for he seems to have been sorry that he had spoken as he did as soon as he was reproved and accused of reviling the high priest. In any case, the ruffian who had succeeded in getting himself into the high priest's office by shrewd political maneuvering deserved the rebuke which he received. He was probably not used to hearing such words from prisoners brought before him for trial.

Part of the Jewish leaders before whom Paul was being examined were Sadducees and part were Pharisees. They were bitter enemies at most times but were now somewhat united by their common hatred of Paul. The great theme of dispute between the Sadducees and the Pharisees was the matter of the resurrection of the body in a future life.

Paul succeeded in arousing bitter division among his antagonists by declaring that he was a Pharisee and that in preaching the resurrection of Jesus he was in harmony with what Pharisees everywhere believed. The accusers of Paul were so irritable toward one another that they forgot, for the time, their common enemy, and began to dispute with one another. They became so uproarious that the chief captain feared that Paul would be torn to pieces among them, so he sent soldiers to rescue Paul and to bring him into the castle.

The Voice of Jesus in the Night. Acts 23:11. That night as he lay in his prison cell, Paul seemed to hear the voice of Jesus speaking to him, just as he had heard it on the road to Damascus and as he had heard it in the midst of his perils and discouragements in Corinth. The voice said, "Be of good cheer: for as thou hast testified concerning me at Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome." The message must have greatly comforted Paul. It assured him that his life would be spared and that his long-cherished dream of preaching Christ in the world's capital would come true under the providence of God.

The Lesson Prayer

Our Father in heaven, we would come to know thee more perfectly day by day. We would worship thee with reverence and obey thee with simplicity and gladness. Teach us to understand the spiritual lessons contained in the character of thy servant whose life story we are studying in these lessons. We ask in the name of thy Son. Amen.

Supplemental Missionary Story

"The Scout of Papua." "The Book of Missionary Heroes," page 118.

EXPRESSIONAL SESSION

THE PLACE OF FRIENDLINESS IN A GREAT AND USEFUL LIFE

Phil., ch. 4

Our Scripture lesson is part of a letter which Paul wrote to the Christians of Philippi. It was written when Paul was in prison, but he was not thinking about his own misfortunes. He was thinking of the friends who were scattered here and there over the world. The letter is interesting not only because of what Paul wrote in it, but also because it gives us a glimpse into the character of the great-souled man who wrote it. The letter shows us the depth of Paul's friendships. He had been most cruelly beaten and imprisoned in Philippi, but he was not thinking of these wrongs when he wrote the letter. He was thinking of his Christian friends who had been true to the religion which he had taught them. He calls these friends "my brethren beloved and longed for, my joy and crown."

The truly great men and women of history have been great as friends. Their friendships have been wide, true, and enduring. Their friendliness has been one of their most important sources of power. No person is apt to accomplish much in life working single-handed. We all need the help of other people, the friendly assistance which is given because people love us and wish us well.

Paul made some bitter enemies but he had to do it or give up part of the great task to which God had called him. He had to make enemies or be untrue to Jesus Christ. He was willing to be friendly, however, with everybody. We have seen in the past lesson how he tried to win the friendship of his enemies among the Jews, by taking part in religious ceremonials which meant nothing to him. He was willing to sacrifice anything he could conscientiously sacrifice in order to gain friends.

Some Truths from the Lessons We Have Been Studying

Paul's farewell to the Ephesian elders is one of the finest pictures of friendship to be found in the Bible.

Paul's friendliness enabled him to get along well with his many helpers. Beyond a minor difference with Barnabas, we do not read of his having had trouble with any of his companions at any time.

Many people are led into the Christian life by the friendliness of those who are professed followers of Jesus. Paul knew the power of consecrated friendliness as an evangelizing force.

Paul's friendships were wide. He made friends among people of all classes. He counted among his friends runaway slaves and those who were of the household of Cæsar. He made friends of old people and of little children.

Paul's friendships were enduring. He had a host of friends at the time he wrote his letter to the Romans, and a good many of them are named in the closing chapter of that great epistle.

Review Questions

1. Show that Paul was a man of physical vigor.
2. Tell of Paul's farewell to the Ephesian elders.
3. Describe the voyage from Miletus to Tyre.
4. Who was Philip and what kind of family did he have?
5. Tell of the voyage from Tyre to Cæsarea.

6. Tell of the reception given the missionaries in Jerusalem.
7. What charge did the enemies of Paul make against him when they seized him in the Temple? Acts 21:28.
8. How did Paul's Roman citizenship protect him?
9. Tell of the examination before the Jewish leaders.
10. Was it wrong for Paul to speak as he did to the high priest?

Bible Verses

Prov. 17:17; 27:9; Mark 5:19; Luke 7:34; 10:25-37; 12:4; John 15:13-15.

Study Topics

1. Some of the Friends of Paul and How They Helped Him.
2. Right Ways and Wrong Ways of Making Friends.
3. The Friendship of Jesus. (See such passages of Scripture as Luke 15:1, 2.)
4. Some of the Elements of True Friendship.
5. The Friendship of David and Jonathan.
6. How Friends Can Help One Another.
7. How We Can Help the Church by Being Friendly.
8. Some Things We Ought Never to Do for the Sake of Gaining or Keeping Friends.
9. How We Can Help to Make Our Church School a Friendly School.
10. What Christian Friendship Means. (Were the Judaizers truly Christian in their attitude toward Paul? Could Peter be a true friend to Gentile Christians and refuse to sit at the same table with them?)

The Lesson Truth Expressed in a Law

The Law of the Friendly Spirit. Friendship makes life useful and happy. Therefore:

1. We will make as many friends as we can, but we will not do that which we know to be wrong in order to win the friendship of anyone.
2. We will try to make our friendship helpful, true, and enduring.
3. We will try to make our friendships useful to the Church and to the Kingdom of God on earth.

Projects for Putting the Lesson Truths Into Practice

The social contacts of the church school may be made one of its most potent educational forces. The teacher has an opportunity to nurture that universal friendliness which is so fundamental in Christian character. The evil effects of cliques and narrowly exclusive friendships should be made clear in the classroom work and in the association which the pupils establish with one another in carrying out the projects which they have undertaken. It might be well to plan a social evening to which each member of the class is permitted to invite one young person, not connected with the class or the church, who could rightly be won for membership in one or both of these organizations. Encourage the pupils to use their gifts of friendliness to help the school and the church with which it is connected.

CHAPTER XV

IMPRISONED IN CÆSAREA AND TRIED BEFORE ROMAN GOVERNORS

WEEK DAY SESSION

THE TRIAL BEFORE FELIX

Acts 23:12-35; 24:1-27

The spirit of an angry mob is one of the most terrible things in all the world. Under the excitement of mob violence people who are not usually criminals at heart will commit crimes. In the preceding lesson we saw the spirit of mob violence which came so near making an end of Paul. In this lesson we shall see how Paul's enemies kept after him with grim determination, seeking to take his life by any means on which they could lay hold.

Another Plot Foiled. Acts 23:12-25. The Jerusalem Jews and the Jews of the Dispersion were now filled with a great rage against Paul and determined to destroy him. More than forty of them entered into a plot to take his life. They bound themselves by an oath not to eat or drink until they had slain Paul. Going to the priests, these men told them about the oath which they had taken. They asked the priests to help them to carry out their plans. So it was arranged that the priests should ask the Roman captain, Claudius Lysias, to permit Paul to be brought before the sanhedrin for another hearing. This would make it necessary for Paul to be brought out of the strong castle of Antonia where he was imprisoned and where he could not be reached by his enemies. He would have to pass through the streets of Jerusalem to the place where the sanhedrin was accustomed to meet. The forty conspirators planned to rush upon Paul and kill him when he was passing from the Tower of Antonia to the meeting of the sanhedrin. Not more than three or four Roman soldiers would be likely to accompany Paul,

and the forty men believed that they could attain their end in spite of what the soldiers might do to defend their prisoner.

Paul had a sister living in Jerusalem. She may have refused to own her brother for she seems to have taken no step toward helping Paul. But this sister of Paul had a young son who was a lad of heroic spirit. He heard about the plot to slay his uncle and he determined to save him. Coming into the castle, he told Paul about the conspiracy of the forty men who had bound themselves by an oath not to eat or drink until they had taken vengeance on their enemy. Calling a centurion, Paul asked him to take the lad to the chief captain. When the boy had been ushered into the private room of the chief captain, he told that officer about the conspiracy and urged him not to send Paul to the proposed meeting of the sanhedrin. Then the chief captain let the lad depart, warning him not to let anyone know about the conversation which had taken place between them. Claudius Lysias was a man of action and he quickly formed plans to save Paul from the danger which was menacing him. He called some of his officers to him and ordered them to make preparations for an immediate journey to Cæsarea.

Fleeing Through the Night. Acts 23:26-35. Claudius Lysias, the chief captain, recognized the fact that the situation was exceedingly dangerous. He knew that the whole Jewish population was aroused and determined to destroy Paul. He had seen a mob wild with hate trying to tear Paul limb from limb, so he made careful preparations for guarding his prisoner in case the news of his flight should leak out and a mob should seek to seize him. He ordered a guard composed of some four hundred and seventy soldiers to go with Paul on the trip to Cæsarea.

Claudius Lysias wrote a letter to the Roman governor, Felix, who had his headquarters in Cæsarea. He told of the attack upon Paul and the trial before the sanhedrin, and said that he did not believe that Paul was guilty of any offense worthy of death or imprisonment. He told about the plot which had been formed against Paul and expressed the wish that the whole affair might be examined in the presence of Felix, the governor.

In the darkness of the early morning, Paul and his soldier guards stole out of Jerusalem and fled through the night down the crooked rocky road which led to Cæsarea. When the party had reached a town called Antipatris which lay on the coastal plain not far from the Mediterranean Sea, part of the soldiers turned back to Jerusalem because they believed that the danger of pursuit was practically over. Pushing on along the coast the remainder of the party reached Cæsarea and Paul was turned over to the Roman governor.

The governor received Paul courteously, inquiring as to what province he was from and promising him a trial as soon as his accusers should arrive from Jerusalem. He did not cast Paul into one of the loathsome prisons where criminals of all descriptions were confined. He commanded that Paul should be kept in the palace of Herod.

The Charges Against Paul. Acts 24:1-9. The enemies of Paul were not long in coming. Only five days after Paul had reached Cæsarea, the high priest, Ananias, appeared with certain elders from Jerusalem. They had made careful preparation for the presentation of their charges against Paul and had hired a lawyer named Tertullus to conduct the case. Tertullus was probably a Roman and his employers may have believed that they increased their prospects for a successful prosecution of the case by hiring a lawyer who was not a Jew to carry on the accusation against Paul.

Tertullus began his speech with some words of flattery intended to win the ear of the governor. He said that Felix the governor had brought peace to the province and corrected many evils, for which services all good people were thankful. Then he stated the charges against Paul. He accused Paul of having raised insurrection among the Jews throughout the world. He charged him with being a Christian, a member of "the sect of the Nazarenes." Last of all, he declared that Paul had tried to profane the Temple. The latter charge was doubtless based on the rumor that Paul had taken Gentiles into the parts of the Temple where only Jews were permitted to go and where it was an offense punishable by death

for any Gentile to enter. The chief priest and the other Jews who had come down from Jerusalem declared that everything which Tertullus had said was true.

Paul's Defense Before the Governor. Acts 24:10-23. When Paul's accusers had finished speaking, Felix beckoned to Paul to answer the accusations which had been brought against him. Paul began with a few courteous words concerning the long term of service which Felix had rendered as governor. He entered a flat denial as to the charges that he had been an insurrectionist and had tried to profane the Temple. He insisted, as he had a right under Roman law to do, that his accusers bring forth proof concerning the charges lodged against him. There was one item of the accusation, however, which Paul would not deny. He boldly declared that he was indeed a Christian and went on to show that the Christian religion was in harmony with all that the Law of Moses had taught and in fulfillment of all that the prophets had preached.

Paul's enemies had made a weak presentation of their case, despite the fact that they had the help of Tertullus, the lawyer. Their accusations were not backed up by evidence. The Romans were masters in the art of government and Felix must have realized how groundless the charges against Paul must be since his accusers had presented hardly any evidence at all to back up their charges. Felix ought to have dismissed the case against Paul, but he was, like so many other politicians of his day, a crafty and selfish man. He did not dismiss Paul, but said that he would give his decision in the case as soon as Lysias, the chief captain, should come down from Jerusalem. Paul was kept under guard, but was allowed considerable liberty. His friends were permitted to visit him and he was confined not among the criminals, but within the palace of the governor.

A Sermon Which Terrified a Crafty Politician. Acts 24:24-27. Felix seems to have been deeply interested in Paul. His curiosity was aroused, much as the curiosity of Herod Antipas had been aroused by John the Baptist. Felix seems to have been interested likewise in the religion which Paul professed. He wished to find out more

about this remarkable religion which could make a man so courageous and strong as he had found Paul to be. So one day Felix brought his wife, Drusilla, and they sent for Paul to come into their rooms in the palace that he might tell them about the religion of Jesus. Paul preached a powerful sermon to his congregation of two. The New Testament tells us that he "reasoned of righteousness, and self-control, and the judgment to come." There was no flattery such as the lawyer Tertullus had used. The governor saw his sinful life as he had never seen it before. He shuddered at the thought of the awful judgment of God where he must answer for his sins. He was terrified and said to Paul, "Go thy way for this time; and when I have a convenient season, I will call thee unto me."

The "convenient season" for Felix to become a Christian never came. He sent for Paul often and talked with him, but he put away the day of decision and gradually the voice which had called him to a higher life grew more faint. He ought to have set Paul free, but he was a crafty and selfish man. He wished to get something out of the case for himself and he held Paul a prisoner because he thought Paul, or Paul's friends, might give him money, thus bribing him to set the prisoner free. So for two years Paul remained a prisoner in Cæsarea. At the end of that time, word came from Rome summoning Felix to appear before the emperor to answer charges of misgovernment which had been brought against him. Porcius Festus came to take the governorship which Felix was now compelled to lay down. Perhaps Felix would have set Paul free before laying down his office, but selfishness still ruled his life and it made him cowardly and unjust. He was sorely in need of supporters in the approaching trial. He believed that the Jews would be won to his cause in considerable numbers if he favored them by leaving Paul in jail. It thus came to pass that Paul was soon compelled again to face his foes in a trial before a Roman governor. This time the trial was before the new governor, Porcius Festus.

Busy Days in Prison. Although Paul was a prisoner during the two years he spent in Cæsarea, he was not idle.

Some New Testament scholars believe that during this period Paul wrote several of his great epistles. We may be sure that he was working constantly, for that was his habit. He was doubtless speaking to others just as he spoke to Felix, the govenor. He told them about Jesus, the Saviour of the world, and urged them to become followers of the great Teacher. We know that Paul found opportunities for service even though he was a prisoner. He was accustomed to speak to all sorts of people. It made little difference whether a person were a slave or the Roman governor. Paul knew that every person needs to know Jesus and to become a believer in him. So Paul always had opportunity to preach Christ. If he could not preach to the multitudes, he preached to his jailer or to some fellow prisoner.

Suggestions for Notebook Work

Trace on the notebook maps Paul's journey from Jerusalem through Antipatris to Cæsarea. Pictures: Paul Before Agrippa, No. 771; Paul Before Festus, No. 651.

SUNDAY SESSION

THE TRIAL BEFORE FESTUS

Acts, chs. 25, 26

The long period of imprisonment at Cæsarea must have been a trying time for Paul, although, as we have seen, he was continually busy about his task of building up the Kingdom of God. He probably spent many anxious days. His own fate was in doubt. With a crafty governor like Felix, there was no telling what might happen. Paul's anxiety was not about himself, however. He was anxious concerning the churches which he had planted here and there over a large part of the Roman Empire. These Christian churches were like stars of light where all else was darkness. Paul longed to hear from them, to go to them, but he could not; he was a prisoner He must wait patiently and do the best he could with the opportunities which were at hand.

The Jews Continued Plotting Against Paul. Acts 25:1-5. Festus, the new governor, seems to have been an upright man. He was evidently one of those strong Romans who had a high sense of justice, the kind of man who had enabled Rome to conquer the known world and to rule it for centuries. Festus had come to a difficult task. The misgovernment of the selfish and crafty Felix had left matters in a deplorable condition. The new governor on his arrival in Cæsarea tarried there only three days and then went up to Jerusalem. That city was the center of the discontent, and Festus hastened there to see what he could do to set things right.

Hardly had Festus entered Jerusalem when the principal men of the Jews and the chief priests came to him and told him about Paul. They made out that Paul was a very dangerous character. They said that Paul ought not to be permitted to live any longer. They besought Festus as a special favor to bring Paul to Jerusalem for trial; in the meantime they were planning how they might waylay Paul on the road and kill him before he entered the city. Festus showed himself to be a strong and wise governor. The Jews had been careful to state that if Paul were brought to Jerusalem they would esteem it a very great favor to them. Festus, of course, wished to win the good will of the leading men of the Jewish nation, but he was determined to be just. He courteously informed the Jewish leaders that it was not a custom of the Romans to give up any man to his accusers without having the accused and accusers meet face to face in order that the matter might be carefully examined. He told them that Paul was kept in Cæsarea, and that they would have to go down there and present their charges in a regular trial.

Paul's Second Appearance Before a Court in Cæsarea. Acts 25:6-12. Having spent eight or ten days in Jerusalem, Festus came down to Cæsarea again. The Jews were on hand, and the next day Paul was brought again before a Roman governor in Cæsarea. The Jews brought a medley of charges against Paul, much as they had done in the trial before Felix. They accused him of breaking the laws of the Jews, of profaning the Temple, and of

being a conspirator against Cæsar. But they had no evidence which would stand in any Roman court of law. Paul again denied the accusations of his enemies, declaring that he had neither broken any Jewish law nor profaned the Temple nor conspired against the authority of Cæsar. Paul would not deny that he was a Christian, but boldly proclaimed that he was a follower of Jesus and that Jesus had risen from the dead.

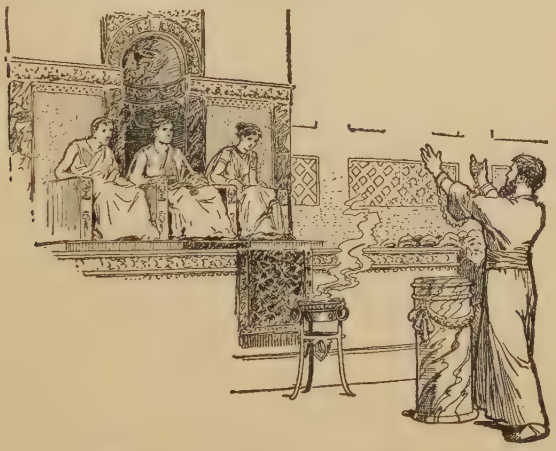
The governor then asked Paul if he was willing to go to Jerusalem for trial. It may be that the governor was on the point of yielding to the entreaties of the Jews that Paul be taken to Jerusalem. Paul knew that if he were taken back to Jerusalem he would never come forth from the city alive, unless God should intervene to protect him. So Paul said to Festus: "I am standing before Cæsar's judgment-seat, where I ought to be judged: to the Jews have I done no wrong, as thou also very well knowest. If then I am a wrong-doer, and have committed anything worthy of death, I refuse not to die; but if none of these things is true whereof these accuse me, no man can give me up unto them. I appeal unto Cæsar."

Paul was a Roman citizen and had the right to ask a trial before the emperor himself. He had now come to a place where he believed that he ought to exercise that right. Festus was now unable to send Paul to Jerusalem even if he had wished to do so. He said to Paul, "Thou hast appealed unto Cæsar: unto Cæsar shalt thou go." The enemies of Paul were thus put under the necessity of sending some of their number to Rome in order that they might conduct the charges against Paul before the court of the emperor.

The Visit of King Agrippa and His Sister Bernice. Herod Agrippa II was a great-grandson of Herod the Great. He had been made king of a small country called Chalcis. Afterward other sections of Palestine were added to his realm. Agrippa was part Jew for he was descended from Mariamne, the Maccabæan princess who had become the wife of Herod the Great. He was friendly to the Jews and favored the Jewish religion. Bernice and Drusilla were sisters of King Agrippa. Dru-

silla was the wife of Felix who had been governor just before Festus.

Soon after Festus had become governor, King Agrippa and his sister Bernice visited him in Cæsarea. Festus told his visitors about Paul and they were much interested. They said that they would like to see Paul and hear him speak, so Festus promised them that he would have Paul brought before them the next day.



On the following day Agrippa and his sister came with all the pomp of royalty and Festus received them into his palace. Also a great company of the chief captains and the principal men of the city gathered together to hear what Paul might have to say. Festus explained to the company how Paul had been accused by the Jews and how he himself had found no fault in the prisoner. He told how Paul had appealed to Cæsar and said that he had gathered the company in order that they might have an opportunity to talk with Paul and to hear him before he should begin the journey to Rome. Festus explained that he had no definite statement to make to the emperor concerning Paul and he hoped that this meeting with Agrippa and the others might give him added light on the case so that he might be able to give the emperor advice as to the probable guilt or innocence of the prisoner.

Paul's Great Address Before a Company of Distinguished People. Acts 26:1-23. Paul had preached before many different congregations, but he had probably never before faced a company like that which was gathered in the palace of Festus the governor. He was equal to the occasion. The conduct of the informal inquiry had been given over to King Agrippa and the king said to Paul, "Thou are permitted to speak for thyself." Paul had some gesture of the hand which had on certain occasions enabled him to bring angry mobs into silence. He used this characteristic gesture as he faced the distinguished company of people in the palace of Festus. When there was perfect quiet, Paul began to speak. He began with a few courteous words to the king, words which he could speak in all sincerity because Agrippa had been a true friend to the Jewish people and had favored the Jewish religion in many ways. He defended himself against the charges of his enemies. He told of the days when he had persecuted the Christians, because he thought that he ought to do all he could against Jesus of Nazareth. He told of the trip to Damascus and the dazzling light which fell upon him at midday. He told of his commission to go to the Gentiles that he might turn them "from darkness to light and from the power of Satan unto God." He explained how it was that in carrying out that commission he had aroused the enmity of the Jews and had been mobbed in Jerusalem. He declared that in preaching the death and resurrection of Jesus he was proclaiming nothing but what Moses and the prophets had foretold, and that these same prophets had likewise foretold the sending of the light to the Gentiles.

The Effect of Paul's Address. Acts 26:24-32. When Paul had reached this point in his address Festus, the Roman governor, interrupted him crying out, "Paul, thou art mad; thy much learning is turning thee mad." These things were so new and strange to the Roman governor that he thought that Paul had been studying so deeply that he was losing his mind. But Paul answered the governor, saying: "I am not mad, most excellent Festus; but speak forth words of truth and soberness. For the king knoweth of these things, unto whom also I speak

freely: for I am persuaded that none of these things is hidden from him; for this hath not been done in a corner."

Then turning to the king Paul said: "King Agrippa, believest thou the prophets? I know that thou believest." Agrippa was familiar with the Jewish religion and he could not help seeing how completely Jesus had fulfilled the predictions of the prophets. His answer was, "With but little persuasion thou wouldest fain make me a Christian." Perhaps he was almost ready to believe in Jesus but he put off the day of decision and we do not know that he ever became a Christian. King Agrippa lived for many years after this event. In the great war which broke out between the Jews and the Romans in the year A. D. 70, Agrippa tried to keep the Jews from revolting against Rome, but when the war actually began, he sided with the Romans. He is believed to have ruled over his kingdom until he died about A. D. 100.

After Paul had finished his address, Festus and Agrippa and Bernice and all the chief captains and leading men of Cæsarea rose up and going into another room they talked over Paul's case. Their conclusion was expressed in the words, "This man doeth nothing worthy of death or of bonds." King Agrippa said to Festus, "This man might have been set at liberty, if he had not appealed unto Cæsar." Paul had apparently won the full confidence of the whole company and he had made them think seriously concerning the religion of Jesus.

The Lesson Prayer

Our Father in heaven, we have seen in the lesson which we have been studying how unworthily certain people have acted because their lives were narrow, selfish, and warped by prejudice. We have seen that it is not good to live a life which is governed by selfish policies. We have seen how strong and courageous Paul was. Give us hearts which are obedient to thy will that we may be guided by high principles of truth and right. Help us in our times of temptation to remember Jesus Christ and his life of perfect righteousness. We ask in Jesus' name. Amen.

Supplemental Missionary Story

"A South Sea Samaritan." "The Book of Missionary Heroes," page 126.

EXPRESSIONAL SESSION

PRINCIPLE NOT POLICY THE GUIDING FORCE IN A GREAT AND USEFUL LIFE

Matt. 9:9-13; John 19:1-16

There are two fundamentally different ways of meeting the problems of life. These problems are solved by some people on a basis of principle. In determining a course of action they ask first of all: "Is this course right? Is it just? Is it kind?" Other people solve their problems on a basis of policy. They ask: "Which course of conduct will be best for me? Which course is safest for me? Which course will cause me most gain, least loss, most pleasure, least trouble?" Great and useful lives are built when decisions are made in harmony with great unselfish principles of truth and justice. Narrow, selfish lives result when the habit of deciding questions on a basis of selfish policy is established.

Our Scripture lessons are illustrations of these two ways of solving problems. Jesus chose Matthew, a publican, to be a disciple. Viewed from the point of view of a selfish policy that was very unwise. It alienated the Jewish leaders because the publicans were a despised class of people. Jesus made the choice on higher grounds than those of selfish policy. He made it in harmony with high principles of truth and justice. He saw in Matthew a needy soul which would respond to his appeal and become a great power for righteousness. Jesus put aside personal advantages for the sake of helping a man to become good and great, for the sake of gaining a strong man as a worker for the Kingdom of God. The choice of Matthew brought the cross nearer to Jesus, but it gave to the world a man who became a force for righteousness.

The second Scripture passage shows us a man who made his decisions on the basis of selfish policy. Pilate knew that Jesus was innocent. He knew that he ought

to set Jesus at liberty. He also knew that the Jewish leaders would make trouble for him if he did not permit them to crucify Jesus. He feared that he would lose his office if the Jews should go to Rome and complain that he had set at liberty one who had been accused of being disloyal to Cæsar. Pilate chose the way which seemed to promise safety and gain for himself but a way which violated his Roman sense of justice and which he knew to be wrong.

People are all the time deciding questions in one or other of these ways. If a teacher has two boys who are competing for a prize, that teacher must decide who is the winner and must decide the question on a basis either of principle or of policy. Let us suppose that one of the boys is the son of a wealthy man who is president of the school board. The other is the son of a poor widow. Now if the widow's son has really done a little better than the rich man's son, he deserves the prize and the honor he has won. He deserves it by a fundamental law of justice which cannot be changed. What if the teacher gives the prize and the honor to the rich man's son, because by so doing he establishes himself in his position? He has made a decision on the basis of selfish policy and has violated a law of God. He may get some temporary gain, but do you know that he has made a fool's bargain? He has sold himself. Jesus had some such truth in mind when he asked what a man would be profited if he should gain the whole world and lose himself.

Some Truths from the Lessons We Have Been Studying

The Jews who sought to waylay Paul were guided by selfish policies rather than by principles of justice and mercy.

Felix was acting in harmony with selfish policy when he kept Paul in prison for two years in hope of receiving a bribe. He was acting according to his usual policy when he left Paul in prison to please the Jews.

Paul showed Felix a different way of life when he preached to him. Paul was only pointing out the con-

sequences of a selfish life when he warned Felix concerning the judgment to come.

Festus was a much higher type of man than Felix. He could have gained favor with the Jews by turning Paul over to them, but he would not violate his own sense of justice by such a cowardly act.

As we have studied the life of Paul we must have noted that his life was governed by principles of justice and truth rather than by selfish policies.

Review Questions

1. What do you suppose happened to the forty men who had sworn not to eat or drink until they had slain Paul? Do you suppose that they died of starvation?
2. Tell how Paul's young nephew saved him from the plots of the Jews.
3. What kind of man was Claudius Lysias?
4. Tell of Paul's trial before Felix.
5. What kind of man was Felix? Was he governed by principle or policy?
6. Show that Festus was a better man than Felix.
7. Why did Paul appeal to the emperor?
8. Tell of Paul's address before King Agrippa.
9. What effect did this address produce upon those who heard it?
10. Explain how Jesus acted according to just principles in choosing his disciples.

Bible Verses

Deut. 6:18; Ps. 15:1, 2; 51:6; Prov. 4:18; Isa. 26:7; Micah 6:8; John 8:31, 32; Phil. 4:8; I Cor. 10:24; James 3:14.

Study Topics

1. How David Acted on Principle. I Sam. 26:6-16.
2. Selfish Policy Unwise in the End. Luke 20:9-16.
3. A Lad Who Was Loyal to Principle. Dan. 1:1-16.
4. Principles Which Governed the Actions of Jesus. I. Mercy. Matt. 9:1-8.
5. Principles Which Governed the Actions of Jesus. II. Fidelity. John 11:7-12.

6. Principles Which Governed the Actions of Jesus. III. Truth. Mark 14:57-65.

7. Everyday Examples of Policy. I. If a pupil cheats in an examination and gains a high grade thereby, has that pupil acted according to principle or according to policy?

8. Everyday Examples of Policy. II. If a boy is orderly when the teacher is in the room but disorderly when the teacher happens to be out of the room, is he acting according to principles of honor and honesty?

9. Everyday Examples of Policy. III. If we talk about people when they are absent in a way we would not talk about them if they were present, are we acting in harmony with principles of justice and kindness?

10. Is a Purely Selfish Policy Ever Really Wise?

The Lesson Truth Expressed in a Law

The Law of Fidelity to Principles of Righteousness and Truth. Great and useful lives have always been guided by principles of truth and justice rather than by selfish policies. Therefore:

1. We will seek to know the principles of justice, mercy, and brotherhood upon which every truly Christian life must be founded.

2. We will try to make our decisions in harmony with Christian principles of life and conduct.

3. We will seek to gain that unselfish devotion to the Kingdom of God and to the good of humanity which makes a policy-ruled life impossible.

Projects for Putting the Lesson Truths Into Practice

Have pupils prepare lists of principles which ought to govern the lives of boys and girls in the Intermediate Department. These lists would include such items as, Truthfulness, Loyalty, Kindness, and the like. Take one item each week and formulate it into a law; for example, "The Law of Truthfulness." Have written reports on the experiences of pupils in carrying out the laws.

CHAPTER XVI

SHIPWRECKED ON THE WAY TO ROME

WEEK DAY SESSION

SAILING ON TOWARD ITALY

Acts *27*:1-*26*

It had long been the ambition of Paul to preach the gospel in Rome, the great capital of the world. This may be one reason why he was ready to appeal his case to Cæsar. Festus now having no further jurisdiction over Paul's case made preparations to send him to Rome that there might be a trial before the emperor. Paul's faithful friend and physician, Luke, had probably been in Cæsarea most of the time during which Paul was a prisoner there. Aristarchus of Macedonia was also in Cæsarea and made preparations to accompany Paul and Luke on the journey to Rome.

From Cæsarea to Myra. Acts *27*:1-6. Festus gave Paul into the custody of a certain Roman captain named Julius. There was a cohort of Roman soldiers called the Augustan band and Julius was a captain in this body of troops. It is thought that the Augustan band had been named after Augustus Cæsar and that they had special duties connected with the carrying on of the Roman Government. One of their duties may have been the carrying of prisoners from the various provinces to Rome. There were other prisoners who were given into the custody of Julius along with Paul. These were probably condemned men who were being sent to Rome that they might be caused to fight with wild beasts, and with one another, in the arena for the amusement of the citizens of Rome. Paul, being a Roman citizen and uncondemned, would receive more kindly treatment than his wretched fellow prisoners.

When a ship belonging to the city of Adramyttium, a town near Troas, put into the port of Cæsarea and Julius learned that the vessel was sailing for the cities on the

coast of Asia, he put his prisoners aboard this vessel and they sailed away northward. A trip of seventy miles brought the ship to Sidon. While the vessel lay in the harbor of Sidon, discharging and receiving cargo, Paul was permitted to go ashore and visit his friends in that city. It may be that Paul was ill from his long confinement in Cæsarea, for the account says that the centurion permitted Paul to visit his friends that he might "receive attention." Julius was apparently already coming to like his prisoner and to put confidence in him.

The usual course for vessels sailing from Sidon was directly across the eastern Mediterranean Sea to Rhodes. The wind was now so directly from the west that the sailors had to sail on a more northerly course and to seek the shelter of the mountainous island of Cyprus. Paul thus came once more in sight of the island where he and Barnabas had begun their work as missionaries so many years before. By sailing close to the island the sailors were able to make their way northward until they rounded the northeastern tip of the island. Then they turned again to a more westward course and crossing the arm of the sea which lies between Cyprus and the mainland they coasted along that shore until they reached Myra in Lycia. Paul had been along this coast before, having stopped at Patara on his return trip from his third missionary journey.

Julius found in Myra an Alexandrian ship which was expecting to sail directly to Italy, so he took his prisoners aboard this vessel. This ship must have been a large vessel for those days. She was loaded with a cargo of wheat, probably a part of the season's crop which was being shipped to Rome. Besides her cargo she carried two hundred and seventy-six persons counting crew and passengers.

Battling with Contrary Winds. Acts 27:7, 8. Tempestuous western winds continued to blow and the vessel crept slowly along the coast. It took many days to cover the two hundred and forty miles between Myra and Cnidus. Having reached the neighborhood of Cnidus, the vessel could no longer face the strong winds of the open sea which lay beyond, so she tacked to the south-

ward seeking the shelter of the island of Crete. Passing Cape Salmone the vessel again faced directly westward. Under the shelter of the island some progress was possible, but it was slow. Finally the vessel reached the harbor of Fair Havens on the southern coast of Crete and near the city of Lasea.

Anxious Days and Divided Counsels. Acts 27:9-13. The season was now unduly advanced. It was October and all shipping usually was tied up from November to February. The passengers and sailors and officers talked over the situation. Some were in favor of spending the winter in Fair Havens. Some were anxious to push on westward that they might at least reach the city of Phœnix where there was a good harbor. Paul advised the centurion to hold the vessel in Fair Havens, but the master and the owner of the ship thought best to set sail for Phœnix. Most of the company on board took sides with the master and owner of the ship against Paul, so the centurion whose word must decide the matter finally ordered that the vessel proceed. Perhaps the centurion might have taken Paul's advice, had it not been that the strong western wind died down and a gentle wind from the south sprang up. So when the sailors had weighed anchor, the ship put out to sea and turned westward. They sailed close to shore, not knowing what might happen at that season of the year and wishing to be within the protection of the hills should the strong western gale spring up again.

In the Grip of Euraquilo. Acts 27:14-20. As the vessel was sailing along close to the shore of Crete a terrific gale suddenly sprang up from the northeast. Luke calls this wind Euraquilo, which means in the Greek language the northeast wind, or the northeast tempest. These northeast winds are still common on the Mediterranean and bring the most dangerous storms known in that region. The tempest was so strong that the ship could not even sail in a quartering direction, but was compelled to drift before the wind. There is a small island named Cauda which lies off the southwest coast of Crete. Toward this island the vessel was driven by the hurricane. Getting under the shelter of this small island, the sailors

seized the opportunity to hoist the boat on board. Most ships of that day carried a boat of considerable size which they towed behind the ship, the boat being fastened to the ship by a cable or strong rope. In times of violent storms it was necessary to hoist the boat on deck or to cut it loose, for there was danger lest it be dashed against the ship so violently that the sides of the ship would be caved in. During the brief time during which the ship was under the partial protection of the island, the sailors managed to get the boat on board.

With the boat safely on deck, the sailors made further preparation for the struggle with the waves which they knew must begin again as soon as the ship drifted beyond the protection of the island. They took a long cable, a kind of huge rope, and forming a large loop passed it over the bow of the ship and drew it back amidships. They did this again and again thus binding the vessel as a boy would rap a string about a broomstick. Then the cable was fastened to a kind of windlass and drawn tight. The hull of the ship was thus greatly strengthened and without this binding it would soon have gone to pieces in the storm. The sailors took down the big sail, lest the masts should be swept away in the tempest, and putting up a small storm sail, they endeavored to steer the ship as much as they could in a northwesterly direction. On the north coast of Africa is a dreary stretch of sandy shore called in that day the Syrtis. The northeast wind was driving the ship straight for this strip of sandy coast and the dread of it filled all hearts. If the ship could only keep in the open sea, she might live through the tempest, but if she struck the Syrtis, all would be lost.

A Life and Death Struggle Which Lasted for Two Weeks. Acts 27:18-26. All on board the vessel knew that their chances of escape from the tempest were meager. Yet they determined to do their best. Everybody helped. Luke wrote, "We labored exceedingly with the storm." The vessel began to show signs of foundering. Everything possible must be done to lighten her. Seizing upon the sacks of wheat, they cast them overboard. Then they threw out the chairs, tables, ropes, anything which would lessen the weight of the ship.

Day after day and night after night they battled with the waves, casting out everything they could to make the ship lighter, pumping out the water which was beginning to spout in through the opening cracks in the hull, stopping each leak as best they could with plugs of wood and bits of sail. No sun appeared by day and no stars by night. No one knew where the vessel might be. The booming of the Syrtis breakers might be heard at any moment. They could not tell on what part of the sea the vessel was because they could not see the stars or the sun. They forgot to take food, and gradually a dark despair began to settle down upon them all. Luke writes, "All hope that we should be saved was now taken away."

Paul had battled as heroically as anyone else. He had helped to lighten the ship. He had taken his turn at the pumps. Now he saw that the end was at hand unless new hope could be given to the sailors and the passengers. He noted that one by one they were giving up. The water began to rise higher down in the holds. The waves broke with greater force across the decks and they came more frequently. The vessel was sinking deeper and deeper and would soon go down unless the sailors and the passengers should resume their places at the pumps.

Paul sought the spaces below deck. He was calm with that deep calmness born of an unfaltering trust in God. He knelt there in the darkness and asked God to spare the lives of all who were on board the vessel. Suddenly he seemed to see a bright angel standing before him and he heard some one say, "Fear not Paul; thou must stand before Cæsar: and lo, God hath granted thee all them that sail with thee." Rushing to the deck, Paul cried out, "Be of good cheer; for there shall be no loss of life among you, but only of the ship." He told them of the vision and the words of the angel, and new hope entered into the souls of all the company.

Suggestions for Notebook Work

Trace on the notebook maps Paul's journey from Cæsarea to Sidon, to the coast of Cyprus, to Myra, to Cnidus, to Fair Havens, to Cauda. Pictures: St. Paul Shipwrecked, No. 447; St. Paul Casting Off the Viper, No. 598.

SUNDAY SESSION

CAST UPON THE ISLAND OF MALTA

Acts 27:27-44; 28:1-6

Paul had saved the crew and passengers from death when through faith in God he was able to awaken their hearts to a new hope. He had shown himself to be the strongest person on board. Though a prisoner, he had stepped out into the place of leadership which rightfully belonged to him as the most capable person on board the ship. In the hour of testing he had not been found wanting in courage, faith, and perseverance. The immediate peril was averted when the sailors and the passengers were aroused from despair, but Paul's presence in the party was still necessary. He was to save his fellow travelers again and again in times of extreme peril before they would all be safe on land. When the party left Myra, the captain of the ship was in charge. A little later as dangers began to threaten, the centurion who was in charge of Paul took command, as he had a right to do as a representative of the emperor. Before the company reached shore, Paul, the prisoner, was in almost complete charge of affairs, because he had shown himself to be the most courageous and resourceful man on board.

A Landfall at Midnight. Acts 27:27-32. Sailors call it a landfall whenever they reach a coast. The fourteenth day after the tempest had struck the vessel, the sailors told the company on board the storm-tossed vessel that they were nearing land. Sailors often have a wonderful instinct in such matters. They seem to be able to detect the presence of land when none is in sight and no sound of surf-beaten shore could possibly reach their ears. When sailors suspect they are getting near some coast, especially when the land is hidden by darkness or fog, they let down a line to see how deep the water is. After a little while they let down the line again. If they find the water becoming shallower, they are sure that they are moving toward land which is not far away. So the sailors on this vessel sounded and found that the water was about twenty fathoms deep. A little later they sounded again and found fifteen fathoms. They knew

they were nearing some coast. To strike land in such a storm and in the blackness of midnight meant certain death.

Quickly casting out four anchors from the stern of the ship, they were able to arrest her drift toward shore. Then the sailors conspired to desert the ship and save themselves. It is often possible to land on a coast from a small boat when it is impossible to land directly from a ship. The sailors believed that they could make shore safely in the boat which still lay on the deck lashed to the ship with cables. They pretended that it was necessary to cast some anchors from the foreship to prevent her from dragging the four anchors which had been cast out from the stern. They pretended that they were going to put these anchors in the boat, take them out a little way, and drop them into the sea, intending as soon as they were in the boat to make away toward land in an effort to save themselves. With this end in view they lowered the boat into the sea.

Paul seems to have been the only person on board who detected the intentions of the sailors. He said to the centurion and to the soldiers, "Except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved." Then the soldiers cut the ropes which attached the boat to the ship and it quickly drifted away.

The Dawning Day and Reviving Hopes. Acts 27:33-38. Paul realized that the company were all weak from long fasting and that they would need strength and courage for the undertakings just ahead. So as the day began to dawn, he took food and urged his fellow travelers to eat. He encouraged them by telling them that not one of them would be drowned or even injured. His words had a marked effect. The company became cheerful as they ate and talked over plans for getting ashore. They began to make preparation for an attempt to bring the vessel to land. They had saved a part of the wheat for food, but now they threw even that overboard in order to lighten the vessel further.

The Landing. Acts 27:39-44. As the daylight increased, they were able to see the shore, but no one could say what land it was. A little bay lay just before

them and beyond it was a sloping sandy beach. They talked matters over. If they could run the vessel into the calmer water within the bay, they might be able to land safely on the beach. It was decided to make the attempt. They cut the anchor chains, leaving the four anchors at the bottom of the sea. They unloosed the rudder so as to be able to steer the ship. They put up a sail and made for the opening which led into the bay.

But the water at the mouth of the bay was not deep enough to permit the vessel to enter, or perhaps the vessel was driven from her course. At all events, the prow of the ship struck the sandy bottom and stuck fast. The waves now began to tear the ship to pieces. A vessel afloat can battle with terrific waves, but a vessel aground and in a storm goes to pieces in short order. The hind part of the vessel began to break in pieces. In the excitement some of the soldiers cried out that they ought to kill all the prisoners lest some of them swim out and escape. It was the law of the times that if an officer allowed prisoners entrusted to his care to get away, his own life should pay the penalty. The soldiers were about to carry out their suggestion, but the centurion thought of Paul and forbade the soldiers to kill the prisoners. The centurion gave orders that all who could swim should cast themselves into the sea and swim ashore. The others were to lay hold on planks and other portions of the ship. The swimmers having reached land were able to rescue those who could not swim, as they came floating in upon the wreckage. So it came to pass that all landed safely.

Hospitably Received by the Barbarians of Malta. Acts 28:1-6. The inhabitants of the island were barbarians, that is, they were natives of the place, not Greeks or Romans who had come there as colonists. They told the shipwrecked company that the island was called Malta, so the sailors and passengers knew that they had been driven for more than five hundred miles by the tempest. It was cold and raining, so the inhabitants of the island gathered some fuel and started a fire so that the shipwrecked people might warm themselves and dry their clothes a little before attempting to reach the settlements which were evidently some distance from the beach.

It was like Paul to take a hand in these efforts for the comfort of his fellow travelers. He began to help gather fuel. He found a pile of sticks which seemed dry enough to burn and carried them to the fire. As he was arranging the fuel so that it would ignite quickly, a viper came out of the armful of sticks and stuck its fangs into Paul's hand. It was like Paul to make no fuss about the matter. He shook of the reptile into the fire and then went about his work of gathering more fuel. Some of the inhabitants of the island began to say to one another that Paul was probably a murderer whom the god Justice had not permitted to live even though he had escaped from death by shipwreck. They expected to see Paul's hand begin to swell, or to see him fall down dead suddenly. When nothing of this kind took place, the people changed their minds and concluded that Paul was a god. Thus for the second time barbarian people took Paul for a god. How different the circumstances, however! In far-away Lystra Paul's power to heal in the name of Jesus had made the people think that he must be a divine being. Here on the storm-swept beach of Malta the barbarians were so impressed by the power of Paul that they, too, believed him to be a god.

The Lesson Prayer

We thank thee, our Father in heaven, for the story of Paul, the hero who faced great dangers courageously. Teach us to see how great and brave he was. Help us to see what it was that made him great and courageous. Forgive us if we have been cowardly, if we have sometimes hesitated to stand up for what we know to be right and true. Lead us through each experience of life that we may learn the lessons which these experiences have for us. Help us to be like Paul who was so strong, faithful, and true. Help us to be like thy perfect Son who was Paul's Helper and the Pattern after which Paul's life was fashioned. We ask in Jesus' name. Amen.

Supplemental Missionary Story

"'A Man Who Can Turn His Hand to Anything.'" "The Book of Missionary Heroes," page 158.

EXPRESSIONAL SESSION

THE PLACE OF FAITH IN A GREAT AND USEFUL LIFE

Heb., ch. 11

In the preceding lessons we have seen how Paul saved his companions by his heroic courage. The kind of heroism which Paul showed is born of a firm faith in God. Most people who have lived great and useful lives have had a faith like that which Paul possessed. The greater and stronger their faith in God, the greater and more useful they have been. The chapter which has been chosen as a basis for this lesson is one of the great chapters of the Bible because it tells us a great deal about faith.

Faith in God is one of the greatest treasures a boy or girl can possess. It guards them from things which are low and selfish and evil. A young person who has faith in God says at all times, "Thou God seest me." Faith in God makes young people ambitious. Believing in God as their Father, they are anxious to be about their Father's business. They are unwilling to waste the precious morning hours of life in foolish and unsatisfying pleasure-seeking.

Some Truths from the Lessons We Have Been Studying

People come to have confidence in anyone who manifests a strong religious faith. The centurion quickly came to have confidence in Paul. Many employers have found that they can always trust a young person who is manifestly a Christian.

The soldiers and sailors on the vessel with Paul were doubtless pagans. They believed in the gods of Greece and Rome. Faith in these gods could not make them so strong and courageous as Paul proved himself to be. Christian faith, and not the mere credulity of a pagan mind, makes life great and strong.

Faith does not lead to inactivity, but to intense activity. Paul was the busiest person on board the ship and he held out when others gave up.

Faith in God gives the self-confidence necessary for real leadership. Paul had absolutely no authority when he went aboard the ship to go to Rome. He was a prisoner and supposed to obey the centurion. Before the end of the voyage he was giving the orders and the centurion and all the others were obeying him. This change could not have taken place if Paul had not had faith in God.

Faith in God makes people humble and democratic. Paul was not ashamed to work with his hands and to pick up sticks with barbarians.

Review Questions

1. Trace on the map Paul's trip from Cæsarea to Malta.
2. What reason have we to believe that Paul was ill when the ship reached Sidon?
3. Tell about the controversy concerning whether or not the vessel should leave Fair Havens.
4. Tell about the coming of the northeast tempest.
5. What did the sailors do to make the ship safe?
6. How did Paul save his fellow travelers when they had given up in despair?
7. Tell of other occasions when Paul's advice probably saved the entire company.
8. What did Paul do to help to get all the people safely to land?
9. Why did the people of Malta think that Paul was a god?
10. Name qualities of character which Paul manifested during the storm and the shipwreck.

Bible Verses

A Definition of Faith. Heb. 11:1.

The Faith of Abel. Heb. 11:4.

The Faith of Noah. Heb. 11:7.

How Abraham Showed His Faith. Heb. 11:8-10, 17-19.

The Faith of Moses' Parents. Heb. 11:23.

How Faith Helped Moses to Make a Great Life Decision. Heb. 11:24-26.

How Faith Helped Moses to Accomplish a Great Life Task. Heb. 11:27-29.

Some Old Testament Heroes of the Faith. Heb. 11:32.

The Power Which Is Born of a Faith in God. Heb. 11:33-38.

Why We Need Faith to Finish the Great Task Which Others Have Begun. Heb. 11:39 to 12:2.

Study Topics

1. What Jesus Taught Concerning Faith. Matt. 17:14-21.
2. Faith and Love. I Cor. 13:2.
3. What John the Disciple Said About Faith. I John 5:1-12.
4. Faith and Democratic Brotherhood Within the Church. James 2:1-13.
5. True Faith Manifested in Works of Love and Mercy. James 1:27; 2:14-26.
6. Washington's Task. (An incident in the life of Washington which proves that he had faith in God.)
7. Lincoln's Faith. (An incident in the life of Lincoln which proves that he had faith in God.)
8. How Faith in God Helps a Person to Be Successful in Business.
9. The Hindering Power of Doubt. Matt. 13:54-58.
10. Ways in Which Faith in God Can Help a Boy or Girl.

The Lesson Truth Expressed in a Law

The Law of Christian Faith. Faith in God and in Jesus Christ enables its possessor to live a strong and useful life. Therefore:

1. We here and now confess our faith in God as the Father of our spirit and the Creator of the universe.
2. We confess our faith in Jesus as the Son of God and the Saviour of the world.
3. We confess our faith in the great truths which Jesus revealed and taught, namely, the resurrection of the dead, the forgiveness of sins, and the life everlasting.

(To be subscribed to by pupils who are willing to do so after serious consideration.)

Projects for Putting the Lesson Truths Into Practice

If pupils have for the first time subscribed to the statements contained in the Law of Christian Faith given in the preceding paragraph, it has been a Decision Day for them. Talk over what James said about "pure religion" and the necessity for manifesting faith in works. Have the pupils undertake some Christian service; possibly they can follow the admonitions of James literally and "visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction." The teacher might tell about Charles Sheldon's book, "In His Steps," and have pupils undertake to do for some stated period exactly what they believe Jesus would do under the same conditions.

CHAPTER XVII

THE END OF THE LONG SEA VOYAGE AND THE TRIAL BEFORE THE EMPEROR

WEEK DAY SESSION

FROM MALTA TO ROME

Acts 28:7-31

The island on which Paul and his companions had landed is only fifty-eight miles south of Sicily. It has an area of about ninety-five square miles and in the time of Paul it had been under the control of the Romans for about two hundred and fifty years. Most of the inhabitants were descendants of Carthaginians and spoke the Punic language, that is, the language of Carthage and other cities like Tyre and Sidon. Some of them were able to speak in Latin so that Paul and his company had no difficulty in talking with them.

Paul in the Home of Publius. Acts 28:7-10. Publius was the name of the man who under the direction of the Roman Senate, ruled the little realm at the time Paul landed there. Certain lands near the place of landing belonged to Publius and he invited the destitute company to come to his own home. There he cared for them for three days until they were able to find shelter elsewhere on the island. Paul brought a blessing to the home of Publius while he was a guest there. The father of Publius lay sick of a fever. Paul entered the room of the sick man, prayed, and laid his hands upon him. Publius' father was healed of his illness and the report spread throughout the island. Many who had sick relatives and friends brought them to Paul and he was able to heal many of them. We may be sure that as he healed the bodies of the people Paul told them about Jesus in whose name he performed his miracles of healing.

Before the close of his stay in the island, Paul won the hearts of the people. The inhabitants sought to honor him

in many ways and when the time came for him to sail away to Rome, they brought him many gifts and abundant supplies for the journey. It may be that Paul's influence in the island led to the establishment of a church there. Certain ancient inscriptions have been discovered in Malta which seem to indicate that Christianity existed in the island early in the second century.

Putting Out to Sea Once More. Acts 28:11-16. The company remained three months in Malta. Spring begins by the first of February in the region of the Mediterranean. So about the first of that month a ship of Alexandria which had wintered in Malta made ready to sail northward into Italy. Luke tells us that the name of this ship was The Twin Brothers. Perhaps the ship had as its headpiece images of Castor and Pollux, two gods who were supposed to exercise special care over sailors. This was doubtless a ship laden with wheat like that which had been shipwrecked with Paul and the other travelers on board.

The ship anchored in the harbor of Syracuse on the eastern coast of the island of Sicily and remained there for three days, discharging cargo and taking on freight for Italy. The next port to which the vessel came was Rhegium, a city on the Straits of Messina, which are here about six miles wide. Rhegium lies on the Italian side of the strait so Paul here for the first time touched Italian territory. Paul was now entering a region made historic by the classic literature of Greece and Rome. The straits of Messina contained the Scylla and the Charybdis, the former a great half-sunken reef of rock, the latter a powerful and treacherous whirlpool. Between these two perils the sailors of that day had to steer their vessels.

The ship paused for a day at Rhegium, but when a favorable wind sprang up from the south the sailors took advantage of it to get through the dangerous straits. With the favorable south wind to help them along, the party sailed rapidly and in one day covered the two hundred miles necessary to bring them to Puteoli, an important commercial city on the coast north of the Bay of Naples. Paul and his companions with the centurion and soldiers left the ship at Puteoli, and the remainder of the

journey was made overland to Rome. There were Christians in Puteoli and they besought Paul to tarry with them for a time. The centurion kindly permitted Paul and his companions to spend a week with these Christian brethren of Puteoli. Then the journey toward Rome was renewed.

On the great Appian Way about forty miles south of Rome was a place called the Market of Appius. Here certain Christians of Rome who had heard that Paul was coming met him. A little farther on, other Christians met him at a place called The Three Taverns. It seems probable that Paul was approaching the great city which was the mistress of the world, with some dread and misgiving. He was going to stand before the emperor, and that emperor was Nero. Paul was not accustomed to quail before dangers, when he was in a normal condition of health and strength, but there were times when his nerves seemed about to give way under the tremendous strain which rested upon him. This was evidently his condition as he journeyed on toward the great city now so near at hand. At such times in Paul's life God always came to his help. Sometimes help came in the form of a shining angel who spoke to Paul in visions of the night. Sometimes it was the face of Jesus which appeared and spoke to him in his dreams. In this case God sent servants of his to comfort and strengthen Paul. When Paul saw the Christians from Rome, heard their messages of welcome, and their words concerning the progress of the Christian religion in the world's center and capital, he lifted his heart to God in thanksgiving and went on with restored courage to meet whatever fate might be awaiting him in the great city.

When Paul entered Rome he was treated kindly by the officers of the emperor into whose custody he was given by the centurion. Julius doubtless told these officers about Paul's heroic conduct during the voyage from Cæsarea to Rome. Paul seems to have come into possession of a considerable sum of money at about this time. It may be that his father had died in Tarsus and a part of the family inheritance had thus come into Paul's possession. At all events Paul was able to hire a house where

he lived in comfort, meeting his friends and carrying on his work with almost no interruption. The only limitation to his liberty was the presence of a Roman soldier who lived in Paul's house and accompanied him when he went out upon the streets.

Paul Calls the Roman Jews Together. Acts 28:17-22. Paul always tried to give his own countrymen the first chance to receive the gospel when he went to any place where he had not preached before. He followed his usual custom in Rome. He called together the chief Jews of the city and talked with them. He told about the charges made against him in Jerusalem and his trial before Roman governors. He told them that he had called them together in order that he might speak to them concerning the Christian religion, which was the religion concerning which the Hebrew prophets had spoken and for the coming of which godly Jews had prayed and longed.

The Jews replied that they had received no word from Jerusalem concerning him. They had, however, heard about the Christian religion and they told Paul that they had heard only bad reports concerning it, that it was "everywhere . . . spoken against." They wished, however, to hear more about this new religion and asked that a day might be appointed when Paul could explain it to them more fully. So it was arranged that they should come back at a certain time when Paul could give them more information concerning the religion of Jesus.

An All-Day Meeting with the Leading Jews of Rome. Acts 28:23-28. On the appointed day a great number of Jews came to Paul's house. The meeting lasted from morning until evening. Paul's theme was the Kingdom of God. This was a subject known to every righteous Hebrew. Paul tried to show them how Jesus had come to set up a Kingdom greater and grander than anything of which they had ever dreamed. He tried to show them how Moses and the prophets had foretold the coming of Jesus and the establishment of the kind of kingdom which Jesus was now setting up in the world.

The company was divided. Some believed what Paul taught, others disbelieved. They began to dispute among themselves. As the disbelieving Jews were leaving the

place of meeting, Paul told them that they were exactly like certain persons concerning whom the Hebrew prophets had spoken. He said that their hearts had "waxed gross" and that their ears were "dull of hearing." He warned them that if they refused to hear the gospel and would not believe it, he would turn from them and preach to the Gentiles. He declared that the Gentiles would hear the message and become the true children of the Kingdom. These were bold and courageous words, but Paul never preached in any other way. No one could ever say that he lacked the courage to speak the truth he believed ought to be spoken.

Two Years in His Own Hired Dwelling. Acts 28:30, 31. For two years Paul continued to live in his own hired dwelling, preaching the gospel of Christ to all who came to hear him. He not only preached but also taught, that is, he appealed to unbelievers, urging them to become followers of Jesus, and he gathered the Christians and taught them about the Christian life and the duties which belong to one who is a disciple of Christ. Neither the Jews of Rome nor the Roman Government made any attempt during all this time to hinder Paul. This unexpected opportunity to preach and teach enabled Paul to put the Christian church of Rome on a firm basis. From Paul's hired dwelling Christianity spread through the city and out into distant provinces. In one of his letters Paul speaks of the Christians who were of the household of Cæsar so we know that he made converts among those who were in the highest circles of society and government. Christianity early became strong in the Roman army and we hear of a great company of Christian soldiers who were called "The Praying Legion." It is probable that this conquest of the armies of Rome for Christ began during the two years when Paul was preaching and teaching in Rome.

Suggestions for Notebook Work

Trace on the notebook maps Paul's journey from Cauda to Malta, to Syracuse, to Rhegium, to Puteoli, to The Market of Appius, to The Three Taverns, and thence to Rome. Picture: Paul Reaches Rome in Chains, No. 773.

SUNDAY SESSION

THE FIRST TRIAL BEFORE THE EMPEROR

Phil. 1:12-30; Philemon *22*

We have now traced Paul through the narratives of The Acts. That part of his life which extends from his conversion to his arrival in Rome is presented to us with a good deal of completeness by Luke, the good physician. The last chapter of The Acts breaks off rather suddenly, as though the end of the book had not been reached. This is probably the case. Luke remained with Paul until the time of Paul's death or until near that time. It is reasonable to suppose that Luke kept right on recording the events in Paul's life. These accounts, however, have never been discovered. They were probably destroyed during some of the stormy times of persecution which afflicted the early Church.

A good deal more about Paul can be learned from the letters which Paul wrote during his imprisonment. Some information can likewise be obtained from the writings of men who lived within a century or two after Paul's death. It thus happens that we can catch only glimpses of the great apostle as he nears the time of his departure. These glimpses, however, show us that Paul was true to the end, that his character took on new grandeur the longer he lived and labored for the Kingdom of God.

The Law's Delay. We do not know just why Paul's trial before the emperor was postponed for more than two years. It may be that his enemies in Jerusalem felt that he would be acquitted in the trial. They had reason to feel so, for he had been declared innocent in every court where the case had been tried and it was a technicality which made it necessary to try him again in Rome. So the Jews of Jerusalem may have made excuses, putting off the trial from time to time, and so keeping Paul a prisoner in Rome. It may be that Paul himself did not urge a speedy trial as he was comfortably situated in Rome and had a splendid opportunity to preach and to teach there.

A Probable Acquittal. We know very little about Paul's first trial before Nero. From his letters we know

that he expected to be set at liberty and it seems likely that the case was decided wholly in his favor. The Jews had no charge against him which would stand in a Roman court where a judge of any honor was presiding. Paul's case probably came up before the persecutions of the Christians began in Rome. Nero in these early days was really not a bad ruler. He had not yet degenerated into the inhuman monster he became later. It is probable that he pronounced Paul innocent, or it may be that the case was tried before some representative of the emperor rather than before the emperor himself.

The Judaizers Still at Work. Phil. 1:15-18. In Rome Paul came into contact with his old enemies, the Judaizers. While Paul was preaching Christ in his hired dwelling, these enemies of Paul were doing all they could to hinder him. They went about telling Paul's converts that they must keep the Jewish law and observe all the Jewish customs if they wished to be saved. In some of the letters written during this time, Paul vigorously defends the gospel which he has preached. It must have been a trying thing for Paul to have these people who called themselves Christians hindering his work during so many years. He faced the situation manfully. He was a good fighter for the truth and he gradually prevailed over his antagonists.

A Journey to the Bounds of the West. It seems probable that after his release Paul made a trip to Spain and the lands of the distant west. A man named Clement, of Rome, says that Paul went "to the bounds of the west." Since Clement wrote these words about the year A. D. 95, and therefore only about thirty years after Paul's death, it is reasonable to suppose that he knew. We know that Paul planned his work carefully, looking years ahead. We know that he planned to visit Rome and to go from there to Spain. So we may believe that this great dream of his life to carry the gospel of Jesus to the utmost western lands was realized. Perhaps Luke, his faithful physician, accompanied him and wrote out an account of the journey as interesting as his account of the journey to Rome. Many New Testament scholars believe that it was some six or eight years after Paul reached Rome

that he was put to death. This would have given him ample time to make the trip to Spain and the tour through the east to be described in the next paragraph.

A Tour from Rome Eastward. It is believed that Paul not only went to Spain, but that he also made a trip through Macedonia and Asia between the time of his first imprisonment in Rome and the time of his second imprisonment there. There are a number of passages in his letters which make this eastern trip practically certain. In writing to Timothy after he had been placed a second time in jail at Rome, Paul speaks as though he had recently been in Troas. He asks Timothy to bring his cloak and his book and manuscripts which he left in Troas. It is not likely that they had been left there on some visit which Paul paid to the city four or five years before. It is more probable that Paul had been in Troas the preceding summer, had left his cloak there, and that writing from his prison cell in winter he asked his helper, Timothy, to bring the cloak when he came.

There are certain traditions also which have come down from the first century which state that Paul made this trip through the countries lying to the east of Rome. We may, therefore, believe that Paul rounded out his life work by a journey to the farthest western lands of Europe and then paid a farewell visit to the churches of Macedonia, Greece, and Asia, before he came again to Rome to make the last full measure of sacrifice for the cause he loved more than life.

Rome in the Days of Paul. Rome was a wonderful city in the days of Paul, the most wonderful city in many ways that the world had ever seen. From it great stone roads radiated like spokes from the hub of a wheel. These roads stretched straight across hill and valley out to the remote provinces of the vast region which the city ruled. Along these roads hurried troops of travelers on their way to and from the world's capital. Roman armies passed along them bound for distant frontiers to suppress some insurrection or returning to the capital with troops of prisoners to grace their triumphal march through the streets of the city.

Rome was built on seven hills and its white palaces

and splendid public buildings could be seen from afar. Into the city several great stone aqueducts led a flood of pure water from the Apennines Mountains. Trees and shrines lined roads, such as the Appian Way. The city had magnificent temples, theaters, and gymnasiums.

The city was magnificent without, but within it was full of wickedness and misery and injustice. The common people were for the most part idle and immoral. Practically all work was done by the thousands of slaves who swarmed everywhere. To win the support of the people, ambitious politicians gave magnificent shows wherein men fought to the death with one another and with wild beasts. The emperor of Rome was an absolute despot whose word was law in all the vast stretches of the empire. When Paul came to Rome, Nero was the emperor. In a few years he was to degenerate into one of the most monstrously wicked characters that history records. There were some true and honorable men and women in Rome, but their numbers were few. Seneca who had been a teacher of Nero was such a man. Like others of his day he had lost faith in the idols the Romans worshiped, but he had come to believe in one supreme God who was the Creator of the universe. Banished to a distant and lonely spot, he could look up into the sky at night and wonder about the glistening multitude of the stars and say, "I am as near to God here as I am in Rome." Men like Seneca were in despair about the future of the world. They could see little hope for humanity. The world seemed dark and the darkness seemed to be growing more dense.

Paul, however, and the Christians, had a hope which men like Seneca did not have. The Apostle John could say in this time of darkness, "The darkness is passing away, and the true light already shineth." Paul could say, "The night is far spent, and the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light."

The Lesson Prayer

Our Father in heaven, we thank thee for the light and joy which have been brought into the world by thy Son.

We thank thee for the example set by thy servant, the apostle of whom we have been studying. We thank thee for his faith, his determination, his zeal in thy service. Grant that all who are professed followers of Jesus, thy Son, may work for the coming of his Kingdom in the way that Paul worked for it. Develop within us a spirit of devotion to all that is true and good. We ask in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

SUPPLEMENTAL MISSIONARY STORY

"A Race Against Time." "The Book of Missionary Heroes," page 224.

EXPRESSIONAL SESSION

THE PLACE OF AN INDOMITABLE WILL IN A GREAT AND USEFUL LIFE

I Cor. 16:8, 9; II Cor. 11:23-33; Rom. 8:31-39

Paul is a good example of indomitable will power. Few characters of history have battled against such great adversities and won such signal victories as did he. In the Scripture passages chosen for this lesson Paul tells of some hardships through which he passed. But Paul not only manifested great power of will himself; he also urged others to develop the same trait of character. His own words, "Quit you like men, be strong," expressed his ideas as to what the followers of Jesus ought to be and do.

The greatest and best men and women of history have had strong wills. They have learned to will rightly and then persevere unfalteringly in the chosen course of action. Almost anything that is worth while is difficult and must be accomplished in the face of constant discouragements. Most of the forward steps which humanity has taken have been opposed and fought by people who were so narrow-minded and so lacking in vision that they could not see that any forward step was needed.

In a strong Christian personality the will to do right and to serve God must be master over all other desires. It was this kind of will that made Paul such a power for

righteousness. It was this indomitable will that carried him through all the years of danger and struggle and enabled him to gain the victory over enemies who seemed more powerful than he.

Some Truths from the Lessons We Have Been Studying

Paul had an unconquerable desire to help people in any way he could. This habit of helping other people was also a great help to himself. It won for him the admiration of his guards, the centurion and the soldiers. It won the friendship of nearly all the inhabitants of Malta.

Paul had an unconquerable determination to be just. He called together the Jews of Rome that he might give them the first opportunity to accept the gospel.

If Paul had not had an indomitable will, he would have been only a daydreamer, building air castles concerning a trip to Rome and beyond the bounds of the far western lands. His will power enabled him to make the dreams come true.

A strong will enlisted in a bad cause is a scourge to humanity. It is a good thing for the world that Paul was converted. What would have become of the Church if his life had been spent as a persecutor and he had put into his persecution the tremendous energy he put into his missionary labors?

Paul's will power enabled him to overcome many difficulties. Among these were his own selfish desires, the opposition of his relatives, the suspicion of the Christians, the resistance of the Pharisees, and the annoying opposition of the Judaizers.

Review Questions

1. Tell of Paul's acts during the three months spent on Malta.
2. Describe the journey from Malta to Rome.
3. Why was Paul glad to meet the Christians who had come from Rome to meet him?

4. Why did Paul call the Jews of Rome together?
5. Tell of Paul's activities during the two years he lived in his own hired dwelling in Rome.
6. Why was Paul's trial so long delayed?
7. What evidences are there that Paul was acquitted in his first trial before the emperor?
8. Do you think that Paul made a journey to Spain? Give reasons for your answer.
9. Why do New Testament scholars believe Paul made a journey through the countries to the east of Italy shortly before his second imprisonment?
10. Tell what you can of Rome in the time of Paul.

Bible Verses

Ps. 40:8; Dan. 4:35; Isa. 50:7; Matt. 6:10; John 16:33; Acts 11:29; Rom. 12:21; I Cor. 2:2; I John 2:14; 5:4; Rev. 2:7.

Study Topics

1. The Weak Will of Pilate. (Study Gospel narratives concerning how Pilate yielded to the clamor of the Jews.)
2. The Strong Will of Martin Luther. (Look up narratives of Luther at Diet of Worms in some Church History.)
3. Why a Strong Will Is Needed by Great Explorers.
4. Why a Strong Will Is Needed by Great Inventors.
5. Why a Strong Will Is Needed by Great Statesmen.
6. Why Will Power Is Needed If a Person Is to Be a Worth-While Christian.
7. How Jesus Tested the Will Power of Those Who Wished to Be His Disciples. Matt. 8:18-22.
8. Ways in Which Boys and Girls Can Cultivate Will Power. (Getting hard lessons in school; keeping down anger in times of provocation, et cetera.)
9. Why a Strong Will May be a Blessing or a Curse.
10. The Meaning of "Our Wills Are Ours, to Make Them Thine."

The Lesson Truth Expressed in a Law

The Law of the Indomitable Will. The accomplishment of important tasks calls for a will power which is strong enough to overcome all obstacles. Therefore:

1. We will strive to overcome the difficulties which we meet from day to day that our wills may become strong for the greater tasks of the after years.
2. We will seek to know the will of God and to bring our wills into harmony with his will.
3. We will seek the help of God that we may stand steadfastly in the right as he reveals it to us.

Projects for Putting the Lesson Truths Into Practice

The carrying on of almost any class activity gives an opportunity to train pupils in will power. These undertakings fail most often because the will of the pupils to carry on the work is not sufficient to carry the undertakings through to the desired end. Plan for some undertaking for each pupil—the memorizing of a psalm or the earning of a sum of money for some good cause—and make it a test of will power. It might be called the "I Will Contest." Have reports as to how pupils have succeeded in the undertaking.

CHAPTER XVIII

LETTERS WRITTEN FROM PRISON

WEEK DAY SESSION

LETTERS OF THE FIRST ROMAN IMPRISONMENT

Col. 4:7-18; Philemon

We have seen how active Paul was during his first Roman imprisonment. He was continually preaching and teaching. He was also writing many letters during this time. He could not leave Rome to visit the churches which he had organized here and there over a large part of the Roman Empire, but he could write to these churches and to those who were in charge of the work which he had begun. He took up this task with diligence. Paul probably had no idea that he was writing documents which would become a part of the Bible. He was trying to help as best he could under the circumstances. Yet four of the letters he wrote during this period have become a part of the New Testament. We know that he wrote other letters during this time. In his letter to the Colossians he speaks of a letter which he wrote to the Christians of Laodicea. This letter has been lost. Perhaps we have only a small part of the letters Paul wrote during the time when he was a prisoner in Rome living in his own hired house.

The Letter to the Ephesians. Eph. 4:1-16. Paul had spent nearly three years in Ephesus and it is natural that he should have had a deep interest in the Christian church which he had organized in that great city and that he should have written to the Ephesian Christians while he was a prisoner in Rome. The letter was probably intended not only for the Christians of Ephesus but for Christians in other cities as well. It is thought that Paul intended it to be circulated among the churches of Asia Minor.

The Epistle to the Ephesians is one of the greatest of

Paul's letters. Its subject is the Church of Christ as the agency to be used of God for the salvation of the world. It tells us what kind of people we ought to be as members of the Church of Christ. As we read its beautiful and sublime utterances, we know that the man who wrote these lines was one of the greatest thinkers the world has ever seen. As we ponder the truths expressed in the words, we are convinced that God was speaking to the world through Paul, that the letter owes its greatness not only to the mental power of the man who wrote it but also to the inspiration of that Spirit whom Jesus said should guide his followers "into all the truth."

The Letter to the Colossians. Col. 4:7-18. It is thought that Paul wrote his letter to the Colossians at about the same time he wrote his letter to the Ephesians. The two are somewhat similar in thought and style, showing that they were written under similar circumstances and at about the same time. The Epistle to the Colossians is a great epistle. It deals with the greatness and majesty of the character of Jesus. Paul declared that we have redemption and forgiveness of sins through Jesus Christ. He calls Jesus "the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation." He declared that all things were created in Christ, that he is over all things as ruler, and that all things maintain their existence through him. Paul evidently believed just as the Apostle John did that Jesus is the eternal Son of God and that "all things were made through him; and without him was not anything made that hath been made." It is well for us to remember that the New Testament writers who knew Jesus best believed him to be the eternal Son of God.

The city of Colossæ was about a hundred miles east of Ephesus. One of Paul's helpers Epaphras had labored in Colossæ and at the time Paul wrote his letter Archippus was in charge of the work there. Philemon, to whom Paul wrote a letter at about the same time he wrote to the Ephesians and the Colossians, was well known to Paul as was also the family of Philemon. The church of Colossæ was using the house of Philemon as its meeting place at the time Paul wrote his letter to this friend.

The Letter to the Philippians. Phil. 3:1-16. Paul or-

ganized at Philippi the first Christian church on the continent of Europe. It is natural that he should have been deeply interested in it and should have written to the Philippian Christians during his days of imprisonment in Rome. These letters of Paul are interesting, not only because of what they contain but also because of the light they shed on the character of the great apostle whose life we are studying. The Epistle to the Ephesians shows us how highly Paul regarded the Church of Christ. The Epistle to the Colossians shows us what Paul thought about Jesus and what Jesus meant in his life. The Epistle to the Philippians shows us how tenderly Paul cherished his fellowship with Christians and how readily he forgot injuries and insults and injustice. He had been shamefully mistreated in Philippi. He had been cruelly whipped, cast into prison, fastened in the stocks. Yet Paul had ceased to think about these things. There are some people who, if they had been treated in any city as Paul was treated in Philippi, would have hated that city ever after. It was not so with Paul. He remembered the little band of converts who had accepted Jesus as the Saviour of the world and who had bidden him good-by as, bruised and weary, he struck out upon the road to Thessalonica. He remembered the gifts which these same Christians had sent him and which they had insisted that he must receive as a token of their love. Did Paul care because some of these Christians were Gentile-born? Did he care because some of them were poor? Did he care because some of them were slaves and not in the social class into which he had been born? Not a bit of it. True Christianity wipes out all such false and artificial barriers and creates one brotherhood in Christ. Paul just gathered all the Christians of Philippi into his great loving fellowship and called them his "beloved and longed for," his "joy and crown."

The Letter to Philemon. Philemon 1-25. One of the most interesting of Paul's epistles is the little personal letter which he wrote to his friend Philemon in Colossæ. It is interesting because it gives such a fine picture of the writer of the letter. While Paul was in prison, he met a runaway slave named Onesimus. This slave had be-

longed to Philemon, but had stolen some of his master's money and had escaped to Rome. Coming under the influence of Paul, Onesimus had been converted. He had felt since he had become a Christian that he ought to go back to his master, confess his guilt, and seek to make amends for the wrong he had done.

Paul graciously offered to write a letter to Philemon, asking him to take the lad back and to receive him, no longer as a slave but as a Christian brother. The letter is a splendid example of kindly, gentlemanly courtesy. Paul told his friend that he would gladly keep Onesimus as his helper, but he felt that he ought to send him back to his master. He reminded Philemon that it might have been God's plan that Onesimus should be separated from him for a little while in order that he might be received back as a brother. How kindly Paul wrote, "If then thou countest me a partner, receive him as myself!" As for the money which Onesimus had stolen, Paul wrote as follows, "But if he hath wronged thee at all, or oweth thee aught, put that to mine account; I Paul write it with mine own hand, I will repay it." Paul had come to have the spirit of Jesus, the spirit which caused Christ to give his own life as a ransom for sinners.

It is interesting to note that when Paul wrote this letter to Philemon in Colossæ, Epaphras who had labored in Colossæ was in prison with Paul at Rome. Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, and Luke were also with Paul at this same time. It may be that they were not all prisoners with Paul. Perhaps they were working in the city of Rome and in other nearby towns under Paul's direction.

"Paul the Aged, and Now a Prisoner Also of Christ Jesus." Philemon 9. When Paul wrote to Philemon, he was probably past sixty years of age. The age of sixty is not necessarily a time of physical decline. Many people have done great things when they were well past this age. Paul had labored so strenuously and he had undergone such hardships that it is probable that he was prematurely old. He was evidently beginning to feel that declining of physical strength which inevitably comes with advancing age. He was growing old in service. He was becoming old and he was also a prisoner. It is

characteristic of the man that he made no selfish complaint. He did not grumble at his hard fate, at the perils and trials which had made him old before his time, at the fortune which had caused him to be a prisoner in his old age. He mentioned these things only that he might the better stir the compassion of a master for a runaway slave.

SUGGESTIONS FOR NOTEBOOK WORK

Make in the notebooks a list of the letters of Paul stating where and when each was written, to whom written, and so forth. Picture: The Appian Way, No. 315.

SUNDAY SESSION

LETTERS WRITTEN AFTER THE FIRST ROMAN IMPRISONMENT

I Tim. 6:11-16; Titus, ch. 2

We have already studied several of Paul's letters in this series of lessons. There remain three for our consideration. Two of these, the First Epistle to Timothy and the Epistle to Titus were evidently written after Paul had been released from his first Roman imprisonment and had resumed missionary work. The other one of the three, the Second Epistle to Timothy, was written when Paul had been cast into prison at Rome for the second time and was facing death at the hands of the Romans.

The Letter to Titus. Titus, ch. 2. We have seen in a preceding lesson that Paul probably made a journey through the countries lying east of Italy after his release from the first Roman imprisonment. It may be that he visited the island of Crete on this trip and left Titus behind to organize the churches there before coming on to rejoin him in Rome. This seems to be indicated by Paul's words in his letter to Titus where he wrote, "For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that were wanting, and appoint elders in every city, as I gave thee charge."

The letter to Titus contains much practical advice to a young man who had heavy responsibilities resting upon

him. Paul told Titus what kind of men to choose as the elders of the Cretan churches. Most of the Christians in Crete had but recently accepted the religion of Jesus. They had been pagans and it was hard for them to understand just what a Christian ought to do and what a Christian ought not to do. It was likewise hard for them to break away from the evil habits which had grown upon them from childhood. Titus must be able to teach these new converts what it means to be a Christian. He must arouse within them a determination to overcome their evil habits. Paul knew that much depended upon the way these converts lived. If they showed no marked change in their manner of life and lived just about as the pagans lived, Paul knew that the cause of Christ would suffer. People judge the religion of Jesus by the conduct of those who profess to be followers of Jesus. Hence a large part of Paul's letter to Titus is given to explanations concerning what the Christian ought to be and do.

The First Letter to Timothy. I Tim. 6:11-16. The First Epistle to Timothy was written after Paul had left Timothy in Ephesus and had himself departed into Macedonia. It is thought, therefore, to belong to the time of Paul's journey through the eastern lands after the end of his first Roman imprisonment. Whether the letter was written in Macedonia or after Paul had returned to Rome, we cannot say.

Like the letter to Titus, this first letter to Timothy contains Paul's advice to a young man who had grave responsibilities resting upon him. Ephesus was a very large city and it was of much importance to have the churches there kept true to the Christian faith. So Paul urged his young helper on to vigorous efforts. He explained what it means to be a Christian. He told Timothy what kind of men ought to be chosen as elders.

Dangerous theories were beginning to appear among the Christians of Ephesus. Certain teachers had arisen who professed to have new knowledge concerning religious matters. They said that what Paul had taught about Jesus was all right, but they declared that Paul had not known all that they knew. False teachings have been a great danger to the Christian Church through all

its history and they were especially dangerous at the time when Paul wrote to Timothy. The Church was weak in numbers and if it became divided over matters of belief or lost its power because its members were coming to believe false teachings it must fail. Paul knew this and that is why he wrote to his young helper saying, "O Timothy, guard that which is committed unto thee, turning away from the profane babblings and oppositions of the knowledge which is falsely so called; which some professing have erred concerning the faith."

Ephesus was a great commercial city and there were opportunities to make a fortune if a person were willing to give all his time to money-getting and not to be too scrupulous as to the methods he used to gain wealth. Paul was fearful lest the desire to get rich quickly might lead some Christians astray. So he reminded Timothy that riches are a fleeting possession. We bring nothing into the world with us and we take nothing out of the world when we die. He told Timothy that the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, and that some in reaching after wealth had gone far astray and had found in the end that the result of their striving was only pain and sorrow.

Paul wished Timothy to seek the things which are above the price of money, which are of a value beyond the power of money to measure. Mark his splendid admonition to the young man whom he called his "true child in faith": "But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. Fight the good fight of the faith, lay hold on the life eternal, whereunto thou wast called, and didst confess the good confession in the sight of many witnesses."

The Second Letter to Timothy. II Tim. 2:1-5. The Second Epistle to Timothy is Paul's farewell written message to the one whom he called his "beloved child." It gives all that we know certainly about the last days of the great apostle. It was written from a prison in Rome and sent hastily to Timothy. It urged Timothy to hasten to Rome. It is evident that Paul knew that he was in extreme peril and wished to see Timothy face to

face before he laid down his life for the cause he had served so long.

The Importance of Paul's Writings. It is hard for us to realize what it meant for the Church and for the world when Paul wrote the letters which are now contained within the New Testament. The wonderful mind of Paul enabled him to understand better than any other man of his time the meaning of the life and teachings of Jesus. Because he understood the mind of Christ, he was able to lay the foundations of belief on which the Christian Church has rested ever since. Because he understood the mind of Christ, he was able to combat the errors of doctrine which menaced the early Church. Because he understood the mind of Christ, he was able to combat the narrow-minded purposes of some who called themselves Christians and to guide the Church out into a broad policy of fellowship which welcomes all mankind who have faith in Jesus as God's Son. In his letters Paul's wisdom has been preserved for the guidance of the Church and for the comfort and help of the individual Christians of all centuries.

The Lesson Prayer

We thank thee, our Father, for the heroic men and women of the Church who have been willing to risk the loss of all things for the sake of the truth. We know that many of the blessings we enjoy were secured through their devotion to thee. Grant that we may appreciate our privileges as citizens of this free country where the Bible is known and read. Help us to develop that spirit of heroic devotion to thee which was shown by so many of the great men and women of the Bible. Show us that by suffering the loss of little pleasures for the present we may be fitted to accomplish in after life things which are worth while. Help us to plan for the future and not for present pleasures only. We ask in Jesus' name. Amen.

Supplemental Missionary Story

"An American Nurse in the Great War." "The Book of Missionary Heroes," page 249.

EXPRESSIONAL SESSION

HUMAN PROGRESS DEPENDENT ON GREAT-SOULED LEADERS

Isa. 6:1-8

There are times in history when humanity seems to have been passing through a crisis and the fate of civilization seems to have been in danger. At such times, in the wisdom of God, great-souled leaders have arisen to save the race from slipping back and losing all that had been gained by centuries of upward toil. Our Scripture lesson tells of the call of Isaiah, a prophet on whom God laid the task of saving the Old Testament religion from utter failure on account of the selfishness and wickedness of the people to whom he had intrusted the leadership in religion.

Men who have stood in the gap when the plans of God were menaced have usually been men like Isaiah who were conscious of God's call and God's presence by their side in the hour of peril. They have been men whom God has prepared for their great task. Moses was such a man; the Hebrew prophets were such men. Paul was one of the great personalities who have stood at the crises in human affairs and turned the tide toward God and righteousness. He appeared at a time when the Church of Christ was in danger, when it seemed about to fail through unwise leadership and narrow policies and faulty interpretations. Paul, under God's providence, had been trained to think clearly, to act vigorously, to labor untiringly. He was the man needed for the times. His great personality saved the day, and succeeding centuries have only served to make his greatness of character more apparent.

God will need great-souled men and women in the future. There are more stupendous problems to be solved than have ever yet been solved. The banishing of war and the bringing in of universal peace are to be accomplished. The problems between labor and capital are to be solved in harmony with principles of justice and righteousness. Jesus is to be made King over all the world and over all of life. As humanity approaches

these goals, the conflict between light and darkness will become more and more intense. Crisis after crisis will arise. Where are the great-souled men and women who will step forward into places of leadership and by their zeal, perseverance, and wisdom help to save the cause of God in these coming times of peril? They are among the boys and girls of to-day or among the generations yet unborn. They must make preparation for the great task which will in due time fall upon their shoulders. Some among them must become the successors to men like Paul and Luther and William Carey.

Some Truths from the Lessons We Have Been Studying

Diligence in his studies at school, a deep experience of religion, and a faithful and diligent service helped to make Paul one of the great men of history.

If Paul had not been a faithful student as a boy, he could not have developed that skill as a writer which enabled him to pen the letters which became a part of the New Testament.

Paul's democratic spirit helped him to be a great leader. He was willing to work with Jews like Barnabas, with people who were half Jew, half Greek, like Timothy, with people who were Gentiles like Titus, with runaway slaves like Onesimus.

Review Questions

1. Name four letters which Paul wrote during his first imprisonment in Rome.
2. Name three letters which he wrote after his release from his first imprisonment.
3. Where is Ephesus, and why did Paul write a letter to the Christians in that city?
4. Tell something about Paul's letter to the Colossians.
5. Where is Philippi, and what experiences had Paul passed through in that city?
6. What does Paul's letter to Philemon show us about the character of the writer?

7. Who was Titus, and what task had Paul given him to do?
8. Tell what you can about Timothy.
9. Why are Paul's letters important to-day?
10. How did Paul help to make the Christian Church strong and successful?

Bible Verses

Ps. 15:1-3; 37:37; 49:14; 51:6; 84:11; 140:13; Prov. 2:21; 11:14, 20; 12:19; Mal. 2:6; II Tim. 2:15.

Study Topics

1. Nehemiah, a Strong and Courageous Leader. Neh., ch. 4.
2. God's Vain Search for a Man. Jer. 5:1; Ezek. 22:30.
3. Qualities of a Great Leader.
4. The Civil War as a Crisis in American History and the Man Whom God Prepared for the Time. (For the pastor or Sunday-school superintendent.)
5. How Bible Study Helped Paul to Live a Great and Useful Life.
6. Why Boys and Girls Who Are Idle and Careless in School Duties Are Not Apt to Become Great Leaders.
7. How a Boy or Girl Who Attends Church School Is Making Preparation for a Useful Life.
8. A Lesson from Paul's Letter to the Ephesians. (Have pupil choose some verse and tell about its meaning.)
9. A Lesson from Paul's Letter to the Philippians.
10. A Lesson from Paul's Letter to Philemon.

The Lesson Truth Expressed in a Law

The Law of Righteous Personality. There is nothing in life more powerful and valuable than character. Therefore:

1. We will study the lives of great and good men and women that we may come to know what truly great character is like.

2. We will study the Bible that we may learn what it teaches regarding true greatness of character.

3. We will take the character of Jesus as our perfect model of righteousness and we will try to become like him.

Projects for Putting the Lesson Truths Into Practice

Paul owed much of his power to a profound knowledge of the Bible and to a deep religious experience. Both of these qualifications for leadership are within reach of most people if they set out to secure them when they are young. It might be a good plan to have pupils who wish to do so pledge themselves to daily Bible reading and to daily prayer. Perhaps a group called "Comrades of the Quiet Hour" might be formed for the promotion of daily Bible study and daily devotions.

CHAPTER XIX

THE HEROIC END OF A GREAT AND USEFUL LIFE

WEEK DAY SESSION

IN A ROMAN PRISON FOR THE LAST TIME

II Tim. 1:15-18; 4:6-18

In a previous lesson we have seen that Paul was treated kindly by the Romans during his first imprisonment in the capital. He was allowed to meet his friends freely in his own hired house and to teach the Christian religion to all who came to hear him. The Second Epistle to Timothy was evidently written under conditions very different from those of Paul's first imprisonment. In this lesson we are to glean from Paul's second letter to Timothy what information we can concerning the second imprisonment of Paul in Rome.

Changed Attitude of the Roman Authorities. In Paul's trials before the Roman governors in Palestine, his accusers had been Jews. The Romans had acted as Paul's protectors against his fanatical fellow countrymen and had quickly ascertained that Paul was guilty of no such crimes as his enemies charged against him. We know little about the first trial in Rome, but it is likely that it was very similar to the trials which had been held in Cæsarea, except that it resulted in a clear and final verdict of Paul's innocence and his consequent liberation.

In the second trial at Rome conditions were quite different. The power of the Roman Government was evidently no longer available as a defender of the apostle, but had become a deadly menace to him. New charges had probably been lodged against Paul and they were charges of treason against Rome rather than charges of heresy toward the Jewish religion. Paul names a certain "Alexander the coppersmith" as one of his chief accusers. We know nothing about this man, except that he was probably not a Jew, if we may judge from his name.

It was probably this changed attitude of the Romans that made Paul certain that his "time of . . . departure" was at hand. He had been saved more than once from the conspiracies of his Jewish enemies by the intervention of the Romans, but now that defense was taken away and he knew that the end of his life was near.

A Favorable Beginning of the Trial. II Tim. 4:16-18. Paul was not afraid to die for his faith, but like a sensible man he battled heroically for his life. We have just a little glimpse of the opening of that legal contest which ended in the conviction and death of the great apostle. The opening conflict was not altogether unfavorable to Paul. We may be sure that Paul stood before Nero with all the heroic strength that had characterized him in the previous trials. The perils about him were so great that he had been deserted by nearly all of his friends, but even so his power of personality seems to have come near to winning an acquittal. Perhaps cruel and crafty Nero trembled before the righteousness of Paul even as Felix and Agrippa had trembled at previous trials of the apostle. Paul says that he "was delivered out of the mouth of the lion." We do not know why Paul's trial took an unfavorable turn which ended in his conviction. We know, however, that back of Nero was a band of men and women more wicked even than Nero himself. It is probable that these evil powers behind the throne were determined that Paul should die and that they found means to secure the desired end.

In Poverty and Distress. II Tim. 4:9-15. In this second imprisonment Paul was no longer living in his own hired house. He was evidently in poverty and want. He was in a cold and cheerless prison, where he felt the need of warmer clothing than he had been accustomed to wear, so he sent for his cloak which he had left some months before in Troas, a thousand miles away, across the sea.

The aged prisoner was lonely without his books for he was a born student. So he urged Timothy to bring not only the cloak which he had left in Troas, but also the books and "especially the parchments." Perhaps these parchments were unfinished manuscripts on which he had

been working that he might send cheer and council thereby to the many churches which he had established throughout the Roman Empire.

Forsaken by His Friends. II Tim. 1:15-18; 4:10. The deadly perils about Paul caused many of his former supporters to find excuses for withdrawing from Rome. Some of them were evidently not made of the materials out of which martyrs are made. In the hour of supreme testing they were found wanting in heroic faith and unfaltering devotion. There was one, however, we are glad to note, who was not found wanting. Luke had been Paul's companion and helper through many tempestuous years and he would not forsake his friend in the hour of deadly peril. Paul could say, "Only Luke is with me." Paul knew of others who, like Luke, would stand by him with unshaken steadfastness. He did not hesitate to ask Timothy to come and seems never to have thought of the possibility that Timothy might hesitate to come to Rome. There was another young man whom Paul believed would come, so he said to Timothy, "Take Mark, and bring him with thee." It is good to know that these three heroic friends of Paul stood by him to the last and counted not the cost. We may believe that many other Christians rallied to Paul's side before the end came, for he names four of these fellow Christians by name, and states that these four with other brethren united in sending greeting to Timothy.

Certainty of the Approaching End. II Tim. 4:6-8. When Paul wrote this second letter to Timothy, he knew that this time there was no escape for him. Calmly he wrote to his friend, "The time of my departure is come." Death had no terrors for the great-souled missionary who had faced a thousand perils unafraid. There was in the soul of Paul an inward peace which nothing could overthrow. He had "fought the good fight." He had finished the task which God had revealed to him on the road to Damascus. He had kept his mind and soul true to the faith which accepts Jesus as the Son of God and the Saviour of the world. Death could have no terrors for a soul so signally victorious as that of Paul.

The heroic courage of Paul in his last hours is in strik-

ing contrast to the terror and horror of Nero under similar circumstances. It was not many months after Nero had sent Paul to execution that the tyrant himself was brought face to face with death. History records that when Nero had been driven from his throne and was about to die, he was overwhelmed with dread. He had fought no good fight during his lifetime. He had not kept faith with men, nor with God. He had finished no good work. For him death was the king of terrors.

"Already Being Offered." The prisons of that day were dreadful places, dungeons of torture where the hapless inmates sometimes lingered long in a living death. The horrors of the Mamertine Prison at Rome have cast a shadow down through centuries of history. Paul may have passed his last days in this same Mamertine Prison or one equally terrible. He was now an old man. Some years before he had spoken of himself as being "such a one as Paul the aged." Hardships and scourgings and prolonged labors had broken him and now in his old age he had come to unspeakable sufferings. His life was being wrung out of his broken body. The sacrifice had begun. He could say truthfully, "I am already being offered."

In this lesson we have been looking chiefly at the outward circumstances of Paul during his last days. But what about the mind and soul of the great apostle? Of what was he thinking as he neared the end? What emotions swept over his spirit? What things in human life seemed to him to be of highest value as he stood in the presence of eternity? We shall inquire into these matters a little more fully in the next lesson.

Suggestions for Notebook Work

Add the following items to the Chronological Table of Paul's Life:

Imprisonment in Cæsarea, A. D. 56-58.

Journey to Rome, Autumn of A. D. 58 and Early Spring of 59.

First Imprisonment in Rome, A. D. 59-61.

Probable Journey to Spain, A. D. 62-64.

Probable Journey Eastward from Rome, A. D. 65-66.
Second Imprisonment and Death, A. D. 67.
Picture: Damascus, Scene of Paul's Conversion, No. 310.

SUNDAY SESSION

MORE THAN A CONQUEROR

II Tim. 1:1-14; 3:1-17; 4:1-5

In his letter to the Roman Christians Paul says: "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or anguish, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Even as it is written, for thy sake we are killed all the day long; we were accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Rom. 8:35-39. The truth of this sublime statement is fully established by what we know of Paul's last days in prison. In this lesson we are to consider how neither tribulation, nor anguish, nor persecution, nor nakedness, nor peril, nor sword could deprive Paul of the joy and peace which were his because he had come to know God as he is revealed in Jesus.

Tenderly Affectionate. II Tim. 1:1, 2; 4:19-22. Paul was not thinking much about his own troubles and perils as he wrote this last letter to Timothy. He speaks of other people ten times as much as he speaks about himself in the letter. His great fatherly heart goes out to Timothy whom he calls his "beloved child." With tenderly affectionate admonitions he seeks to strengthen his young helper so that, whatever trials may come, he may not fail. "Thou therefore, my child, be strengthened in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. . . . Remember Jesus Christ . . . Give diligence to present thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed": these are some of Paul's farewell admonitions to the

young man whom he loved as his own son. Paul also remembers Onesiphorus who had often received him into his own house and who had sought him out in Rome when certain other professed followers of Christ were keeping away from Paul because he was a prisoner bound with a chain to a Roman soldier. Paul sends farewell greetings to this faithful friend who was with Timothy in Ephesus.

Paul likewise remembers Aquila and Priscilla with whom he had labored as a tentmaker and with whom he had struggled against obstacles and opposition to lay the foundations of the Christian Church in Ephesus. Paul had friends scattered all over the Roman Empire, and the thought of them made him glad in spite of the dreadful conditions about him on every side. These friends were his hope and joy and crown of rejoicing.

Continuing Steadfastly in Prayer. II Tim. 1:3, 4. Prayer had long held a large place in Paul's life, and now that he was shut up in prison he continued to find daily help in his communion with God. Even in prison, Paul found much for which to be thankful and his prayers of thanksgiving ascended to God from his dungeon cell. He was praying for other people rather than for himself. He told Timothy that he was praying for him night and day. He was praying for the churches he had established. These churches contained many who had lived long in paganism and were fighting valiantly to live lives worthy of their Master. They contained many who were undergoing persecutions for their faith. Paul could not go to these beloved brethren, but his heart yearned for them. He could not reach many of them by messenger or by letter, but he could bear them all before God's throne in prayer.

Thinking of the Great Cause. II Tim. 4:1-5. To preach the gospel of Christ had become the ruling passion of Paul's life. In his devotion to his great life task he had lost sight of self. That the Gentiles should know about Jesus and the resurrection was a cause so precious to him that he counted his own life as of small value in comparison with it. This is why he worried so little about the perils which were all about him and thought so

much about the success of the movement which he had helped to launch. This is why we find him saying so earnestly to Timothy, "I charge thee in the sight of God, and of Christ Jesus, who shall judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom: preach the word; be urgent in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching."

This concern of Paul for the Christian cause made him anxious to leave behind him Christian churches which were united, devoted to the truth, and faithful to Christ even under bitter persecutions. Hence, a considerable part of this last letter of the great apostle has to do with the relations of Christians to one another within the Church. He tries to reach his fellow Christians with a farewell message through Timothy. He gives Timothy admonitions which are to be passed on to the members of the Church everywhere. "Of these things put them in remembrance," he says, "that they strive not about words, to no profit, to the subverting of them that hear."

Victorious Faith. II Tim. 1:12; 4:6-8, 18. This last letter of Paul is full of evidences of a faith which rose victorious over the dark circumstances which encompassed the apostle. He was about to suffer death as a malefactor, yet his faith in Jesus enabled him to say, "I am not ashamed; for I know him whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that he is able to guard that which I have committed unto him against that day." Under the appalling sufferings of the prison he felt that his life was already being poured out, just as the Jewish priests were accustomed slowly to pour out the drink offering upon the altar of sacrifice, yet his faith in Jesus enabled him to face the situation with a shout of triumph: "I am already being offered, and the time of my departure is come. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give to me at that day; and not to me only, but also to all them that have loved his appearing." Nero, the unrighteous judge, had power to condemn unjustly, but his power was for only a little time. Paul could see beyond to another court where a righteous

Judge should place upon his brow a crown of victory and receive him into eternal fellowship. "The Lord will deliver me from every evil work, and will save me unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be the glory for ever and ever. Amen." Thus with a shout of triumphant faith the apostle went toward death, unafraid to endure the worst that his enemies could do unto him.

The Ostian Way and the Martyr's Crown. There was a great stone highway running from Rome down to its seaport on the Mediterranean. This road was called the Ostian Way. Tradition says that after Paul had been condemned to death by Nero, he was taken out upon this highway for execution. As a Roman citizen, Paul could not be legally put to death in any other way than by beheading, so this was the form of execution specified in the condemnation of the apostle. And so it came to pass that Paul, like his Master, suffered death beside a public roadway where many were passing to and fro.

"These that are arrayed in the white robes, who are they, and whence came they? . . . These are they that come out of the great tribulation, and they washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God; and they serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall spread his tabernacle over them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun strike upon them, nor any heat: for the Lamb that is in the midst of the throne shall be their shepherd, and shall guide them unto fountains of waters of life: and God shall wipe away every tear from their eyes."

The Lesson Prayer

Our Father in heaven, we thank thee for our church school, and for the opportunity to learn about great men and women who have loved thee and obeyed thee in the centuries that are past. We thank thee for the Church which they helped to establish by their labors and prayers. Teach us to appreciate the blessings which are so abundantly bestowed upon our lives. Help us to be morally earnest, mentally alert, and spiritually clean, so that we may do the tasks which may come to us in our

lifetime. Help us to do something to make the world better for our having lived in it. Show us how to be unselfish and generous and just. Show us how to use the truths which we have learned in our study of the life of Paul. We ask these things in the name of Jesus thy Son. Amen.

Supplemental Missionary Story

"The Arrows of Santa Cruz." "The Book of Missionary Heroes," page 103.

EXPRESSIONAL SESSION

TREASURES MORE PRECIOUS THAN LIFE

Job 2:1-6

"Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life." This sneering remark of Satan is recorded in the interesting introduction to the Old Testament poem which we call The Book of Job. Satan declared that when hard pressed men always followed a selfish "safety-first" policy; that there was nothing which a man would not give up to save his life. What Satan said is, unfortunately, true of some people, but when the statement is made that every person lives in obedience to this law of self-preservation, the statement becomes an enormous slander on the human race. Every truly noble soul has treasures more precious than life. To find out what some of these treasures are, and how this higher principle controls the souls of men and women of noble personality, is the task before us in this session of the church school.

Some Truths from the Lessons We Have Been Studying

Satan's words were true of Nero, but not of Paul. Nero would have given anything he possessed or have done any deed if he could have saved his own life when his enemies came upon him. There were many things which Paul refused to give up even though his life must pay the penalty of a refusal.

Paul could have saved his life by giving up his religion. If he had renounced Christ, the Pharisees would have received him back with open arms and his life would have been saved from dangers and persecutions.

Paul could have saved his life by giving up his task. He might have retired to some quiet place and lived out his life in peace, but Jesus had appointed him a missionary to the Gentiles. It was a choice between life and duty, and he chose the pathway of duty.

Paul could have saved his life by compromising with evil. There were a good many halfway Christians who escaped persecution and death. It was Paul's whole-souled devotion to Jesus that cost him his life. It was a choice between a half-hearted devotion to Jesus and a long life, and whole-souled devotion to Jesus with persecutions and an untimely death. Paul chose the latter.

Timothy, Mark, and Luke were willing to risk their lives in order that they might be with Paul during his last days. Satan's sneer was not true of them. They would not give up their devotion to a friend to save their own lives.

Paul's good friends, Aquila and Prisca, valued the life of Paul above their own lives. In one of his letters Paul says of them that for his life they "laid down their own necks."

Review Questions

1. Name some ways in which Paul's second Roman imprisonment differed from his first Roman imprisonment.
2. Why do we believe that Paul's trial began favorably?
3. Give some proofs that Paul was in poverty during his second imprisonment at Rome.
4. Why did some of Paul's friends forsake him? Do you think that Satan's statement was true of these Christians who abandoned Paul in his hour of peril?
5. Name some friends who stood by Paul to the end. Was Satan's sneer true of them?
6. What did Paul mean when he said that he was "already being offered"?
7. Show that Paul's love for his friends continued to the end of his life.

8. What were Paul's habits of prayer?
9. Show that Paul was thinking much concerning the cause of Christ as he neared the end of his life.
10. What do we know concerning the place and manner of Paul's death?

Bible Verses

Matt. 13:44; 16:26; Luke 12:22, 23; John 10:11; 12:24; 15:13; Acts 20:24; Rom. 16:3, 4; Phil. 3:7-9; II Peter 1:1.

Study Topics

1. How Esther Risked Her Life to Save Her People. Esth., chs. 4, 5.
2. Causes for Which a Christian May Justly Risk His Life.
3. Some Values Which a Christian Will Consider More Precious Than Life.
4. Some Things for Which a Christian Ought Not to Risk His Life.
5. A Hero of the Foreign Mission Field. (Tell the life story of some famous missionary.)
6. A Hero of the Home Mission Field. (Marcus Whitman, Sheldon Jackson, or Henry H. Spalding.)
7. The Coast Guard or Life-Saving Service of the United States.
8. Occupations Which Demand Heroic Unselfishness. (Ill.: The Work of a Physician in Time of Epidemics.)
9. The Difference Between Foolhardiness and Heroic Courage.
10. How We Can Show Heroic Devotion to the Cause of Christ.

The Lesson Truth Expressed in a Law

The Law of Supreme Life Values. The people who look upon life as an opportunity to serve humanity and to glorify God accomplish most of high and abiding value. Therefore:

1. We will try to make service rather than selfish pleasure the standard by which we measure life values.

2. We will look upon life as a sacred trust and not risk life or health in a foolhardy fashion.

3. We will try to appreciate more and more those values which are more precious than life itself.

Projects for Putting the Lesson Truths Into Practice

Ask pupils to write out a brief answer to the query: "What have I lived for during the past week?" Encourage them to ask themselves such questions as "Have I lived to make other people happy, or to secure pleasure for myself?" Have pupils make a list of things for which Paul lived and labored. Discuss these lists and talk over ways in which Intermediate pupils may live for the things of greatest and most lasting value.

CHAPTER XX

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE GREAT APOSTLE

WEEK DAY SESSION

A FRIEND AND HELPER OF MEN

Rom., ch. 16

The events of Paul's life which are contained in the New Testament records, and which we have studied, give us a fairly complete picture of the kind of man Paul was. We have watched him as a boy in his home town. We have seen him launching out upon his life work, full of ardent but mistaken zeal for the faith of his forefathers. We have seen his zeal degenerating into the cruelty of a fanatical persecutor. We have watched him as he passed through that profound spiritual experience which changed him from Saul the persecutor to Paul the preacher and missionary. We have seen him among pagans and among Pharisees, before kings, and laboring with tentmakers. We have seen him in moments of exultation and in times when his spirit was overwhelmed by perils and sufferings. In completing the study of this great man's life it will be helpful to gather into one view and to name definitely some of the traits of character which were his. In this lesson we shall consider those characteristics which he manifested especially in his dealings with his fellow men.

Self-Respect. The Christian religion saved Paul from becoming an egotist; that is, it saved him from being conceited and self-centered and selfishly ambitious. His disposition was naturally inclined that way. He was not by nature humble and self-effacing like Luke. Luke wrote a large part of the New Testament and never mentioned his own name once. Paul mentioned himself frequently, and did not hesitate to advise others to follow him as an example.

The Christian religion restrained and purified Paul's self-feeling so that it became a noble self-respect, almost a self-reverence. This self-confidence based on his new

fellowship with Jesus enabled him to say, "I can do all things in him that strengtheneth me." It helped him to become a great force which God could use in his plans for redeeming mankind from ignorance and superstition and sin.

Courage. We hardly need to be told that Paul was a man of lofty courage. He possessed physical courage. Neither howling mobs in the city nor howling tempests on the sea could make him afraid. Time and again he stood face to face with death, but he never quailed. Paul had not only physical courage but also moral courage. He dared to stand alone against his own countrymen. He dared to stand alone in the controversies with his fellow Christians when he felt that he was right and they were wrong.

Honesty. Paul was honest. By this we mean something more than that he did not tell lies. He had that fundamental allegiance to the truth which has characterized men like Abraham Lincoln. He was not guided by self-deceiving prejudices. He never pursued a plan with secret motives lying back of all he did. As we would say to-day, "He never sailed under false colors." He was sincere, even when he was persecuting the Christians.

Sympathy. Paul had that fine quality of soul which enables its possessor to put himself in another's place. He could rejoice with those who rejoiced and weep with those who wept. Sympathy made him a friend of little children and they clung to him when he was taking leave of his Christian brethren on the beach at Tyre. Sympathy made him the friend of young lads like Timothy, Mark, and Titus. Sympathy enabled him to win devoted friends wherever he went and, what was of more importance, to turn many to the Saviour of the world.

Earnestness. No one who has studied the life of Paul can doubt that he was tremendously in earnest. Moral earnestness had a great deal to do with his wonderful career. His earnestness is admirably stated in his own words concerning himself: "One thing I do, forgetting the things which are behind, and stretching forward to the things which are before, I press on toward the goal unto the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

Courtesy. Paul was a well-bred gentleman. The New

Testament records no discourteous act of his. He had to speak plainly to people on certain occasions, but he did it in a courteous manner. His address before King Agrippa is a masterpiece of courteous appeal. His little letter to Philemon is one of the world's classical illustrations of courteous letter-writing. It would be hard to overestimate the advantage it was to Paul that he had developed habits of politeness.

Humility. We have said that Paul came near being an egotist. He escaped that fate because he came to know Jesus and to become in some degree like his great Teacher. Certain things in his life were used of God to develop a Christian humility in his servant. When Paul fell to thinking about the great things he had accomplished and his natural egotism began to swell up into unworthy pride, there would come a thought which caused his head to bow in meekness and he would say, "I persecuted the Church of Christ." Moreover, some bodily affliction rested upon him and he came to see that this hardship was a blessing in disguise because it kept him humble and helped him to realize his dependence upon God.

His humility made Paul democratic. His early training had fitted him to become a typical Pharisee, proud, self-righteous, and exclusive. Without Christianity he would have been like other Pharisees who despised the common people and dreaded to touch the garments of a workingman. All this was reversed when Paul became a Christian. He became one of the most democratic men the world has ever seen. He recognized the universal brotherhood of man. He became the companion and helper of the Gentiles he had once despised. He had fellowship with slaves. He labored with his hands and talked with his fellow workmen as they toiled together. He called converted pagans his "beloved and longed-for," his "joy and crown." He picked up sticks on the beach of Malta that he might kindle a fire to warm his shipwrecked companions and himself.

Tenderness. The bravest are often the most tender. Cowards are apt to be cruel. Among the Christians in Rome was a certain man named Rufus. He lived with

his aged mother. Paul had learned about this mother and her son. Possibly he had met them on some of his missionary journeys. It may be that they were converted to Christianity under Paul's influence. At all events Paul kept that son and his mother in mind. At Corinth he composed his letter to the Roman Christians. This letter is one of the greatest documents ever written. At the close of the letter Paul sent personal greetings to many people in Rome. Perhaps the letter was read before the assembled church. What a delightful surprise it must have been to that little old woman and her son to hear this tender salutation from the great apostle, "Salute Rufus the chosen in the Lord, and his mother and mine."

Leadership. Paul possessed the qualities needed for leadership. He had the characteristics which inspire confidence. He possessed that indomitable will without which no man has ever led others in a long and dangerous and difficult quest.

Diligence. We must have been impressed by the tremendous diligence of Paul. He did not follow a policy of as little work and as much pleasure as possible. Sick or in prison or marooned on a lonely island he found something to do, and he did it with all his might.

Perseverance. Paul never gave up. Difficulties seemed to breed in him a dogged determination to succeed. If he did not accomplish his purpose at one attempt he tried again. He became discouraged at times, but discouragement seemed to goad him on to greater effort and in new endeavors he found renewed courage.

Ambition. Paul aimed high. He was a man of worthy ambition. His ambition seems to have grown higher and stronger with his advancing years. At an age when most men are beginning to think of retirement and a life of quiet ease, Paul was saying of himself, "I must see Rome and after that I must pass on to Spain."

Suggestions for Notebook Work

Have pupils make out a list of other characteristics of Paul and indicate the New Testament passages which illustrate the qualities of character named. Picture: Mars' Hill, Athens, No. 457.

SUNDAY SESSION

A SOUL THAT FELT THE PRESENCE OF GOD

Rom. 5:1-11

In the preceding lesson some of Paul's qualities of character were listed and briefly discussed. Paul was seen to be a man of courage and sympathy. His attitudes toward his fellow men were seen to be on a high plane of helpfulness. These right relationships had a foundation which was not discussed in the preceding chapter. People who live helpfully and sympathetically with their fellows are able to do so because they have come to know and obey the Father and God of all mankind. Back of Paul's attitudes toward people was his relationship to God. There can be no true brotherhood among men without righteousness toward God.

Thoughtless people sometimes say that it does not make so very much difference what a person believes about God so long as that person treats his fellow men justly and kindly. Such statements are very misleading. They overlook the fact that a person's ideas of God determine that person's attitudes toward mankind. Monsters of iniquity and cruelty like Herod, Nero, and the Duke of Alva have been scourges to mankind because they either left God out of their thinking or held ideas concerning him which were erroneous and degraded. When the Turks destroyed tens of thousands of women and children during and after the World War, they were acting in harmony with the ideas of God taught them by their religion.

Underneath the majestic character of the apostle whose life we have been studying were certain beliefs concerning God. These beliefs entered into all he did and all that he planned. They made him true and faithful among men. They molded his character in forms of strength and grandeur. It ought to be a matter of utmost importance, then, to determine what Paul believed about God. Boys and girls of the Intermediate Department are establishing lifelong ideas about God. It is well for them to know that these ideas will have more to do with their destinies than anything else they learn or do.

The Majestic Creator of the Universe. Rom. 1:20. From his infancy Paul had been taught that Jehovah made the heavens and the earth. He had heard the sublime story of the creation as it is contained in the Book of Genesis. To him the world of Nature spoke of the "everlasting power and divinity" of God. As a child he had joined in the synagogue songs which proclaimed the glory of God as revealed in his works:

> "The heavens declare the glory of God;
> And the firmament showeth his handiwork.
> Day unto day uttereth speech,
> And night unto night showeth knowledge."
> —Ps. 19:1, 2.

We have even stronger grounds for believing in a God who is the majestic Creator of the universe than Paul had. The more we know about the universe, the more wonderful and mysterious it is seen to be; the more we need the thought of a great First Cause who is the source of all things.

The Ever-Present Ruler. Acts 13:16-33. There are some people who believe that God created the universe and set it in motion and then withdrew leaving the universe to take care of itself. These people are called deists. Paul was no deist. He believed that God was present in the events of history, working toward the great goal which he had set before humanity. In his address to the synagogue congregation in Pisidian Antioch, Paul showed how God had worked through Jewish history and how he had prepared the world for the coming of Jesus his Son.

The person who studies history profoundly will find God everywhere in the record of world events, unless, indeed, he be spiritually blind. As the scientist of spiritual vision finds God in the natural world, so the historian of spiritual vision finds him in the currents of human history. Here and there in the history of our own country the providence of God is evident. His presence is still more plainly seen when we survey our national history as a whole.

Because Paul could see God's hand in the current of

world events, he was able to act in harmony with God's plans. If he had been a disbeliever in God, he could not have become the great leader of one of the mightiest forces of history.

The Holy One of Israel. Isa. 6:1-5; Rom. 1:18. It is a significant fact that the great religious leaders of humanity have usually passed through some spiritual experience wherein they came to understand something of the perfect holiness of God. Not all of them have seen visions such as Isaiah saw of angels chanting a song of praise and saying, "Holy, holy, holy, is Jehovah of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory." All have come to understand something of God's holiness, however, and have felt something of the awe which Isaiah felt when he said, "Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, Jehovah of hosts."

Paul had caught a vision of the holiness of God. Thinking of such a God many times a day, praying to such a God, believing that such a God was watching everything he said or did or thought, Paul developed a character of strength and grandeur.

The Righteous Judge. Rom. 1:28-32. Paul believed in a God of perfect righteousness and unchanging justice. If a person really believes in such a God, it is next to impossible for that person to grow deceitful and hypocritical in his own soul. Unbelief is the soul darkness in which evils grow like mold in a dark cellar. Full faith in a God of righteousness and justice, a God of perfect wisdom who knows the innermost thought of the heart, helps a person to become righteous and just.

The Heavenly Father. Rom. 5:1-11. Most of what we have said thus far concerning Paul's ideas of God may have been learned by the apostle at an early age. The Jewish religion emphasized the creative power of God, his presence in the affairs of men, his holiness, and his justice. When Paul was converted to Christianity, he came to know certain things about God which he could not have learned without becoming a Christian. The greatest elements of God's character are revealed in their

fullness only in the life, teachings, and death of Jesus his Son. Through Jesus, Paul came to know God as the heavenly Father. Paul came to understand, better perhaps than any other man of his day, how the death of Jesus on the cross revealed the infinite love for a sinful and rebellious world.

It was this last-named tribute of God that took hold of Paul's soul and lifted him to strength and grandeur of personality. It was not the idea of a God of power or a God of exalted holiness or a God of ever-present activity or a God of perfect righteousness, so much as it was the idea of a God of compassion and self-sacrifice that inspired Paul and made him a mighty worker for the Kingdom.

A God Triumphant. I Cor. 15:1-19. The great change in Paul's life came when, on the road to Damascus, he was convinced that God had raised Jesus from the dead. A belief in the resurrection of Jesus gave him a vision of the ultimate triumph of God and righteousness over all the forces of evil. With the resurrection of Jesus the triumph of God had begun. This is why Paul never felt that he was fighting a losing battle, even when everything seemed to be going against him. He was "in league with the Infinite." His plans could never really fail because his plans were God's plans and God could not fail.

If we wish a brief statement concerning how Paul was saved from a worse than useless career as a persecutor to become a force for righteousness during his own generation and forever, we can find it in his own words of advice given to people of his day: "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord, and shalt believe in thy heart that God raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved: for with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." Rom. 10:9, 10.

The Lesson Prayer

Our Father in heaven, we pray that we may come to know thee better every day. Help us to see thee in thy works of creation. Teach us to understand thy holiness. As we study about the events of history, help us to see

the working out of thy plans in all the affairs of men. We thank thee for the gift of thy Son, who has made it possible for us to know thee as Father. We thank thee for the Church and all its agencies for uplifting humanity. We thank thee for the many who have followed thy Son and who have left to us the inspiration of their devoted and useful lives. Amen.

SUPPLEMENTAL MISSIONARY STORY

"The Man Who Would Go On." "The Book of Missionary Heroes," page 131.

EXPRESSIONAL SESSION

POSSIBILITIES OF SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT AND DANGERS OF SPIRITUAL DEGENERATION

I John 3:1-3; Rom. 1:18-25

Luther Burbank has been called "The Plant Wizard." He has taken a common wayside weed and developed it into the Shasta daisy. Out of the wild thorny cactus he has developed the thornless cactus which makes excellent fodder for cattle and bears fruits delicious to man. Plants are not only capable of development, but likewise capable of degeneration. In some western states the garden lettuce has taken to the fields and grows wild. It no longer forms the delicious heads which it developed under the gardener's care. It has become so bitter in taste that people can no longer eat it.

This matter of development and degeneration belongs to all living things. We see it in bird life. The oriole has developed the power to build a nest that is a marvel of beauty and convenience and his song is clear and pleasing. The cowbird has shirked the responsibilities of home-building and has lost the skill needed to construct a nest and the power to sing a pleasing song.

Development and degeneration are continually contending for supremacy in our lives. If we take proper exercise and eat wholesome food, we develop physical health. If we live in defiance of the laws of health, sooner or

later we find that physical degeneration is steadily breaking down the powers of the body.

Mental power is capable of almost unlimited development, but if it is not used it quickly degenerates. The great musicians, philosophers, and authors of the race have owed their greatness to a constant and careful development of their native powers. In many cases, these eminent people were not more gifted than thousands of their fellow men, but they went forward, whereas most of their companions loitered by the way and ultimately lost the talents with which God had endowed them.

In nothing is this tendency to develop or degenerate more marked than in spiritual matters. Almost limitless opportunities for development are open to the soul of man, but there are, likewise, almost limitless depths of degradation into which the soul is apt to sink unless there is a constant upward striving. The soul may become more and more like Jesus Christ or it may become more and more unlike him. We ought all of us to pause occasionally and take account of stock, to ask ourselves, "Which way am I moving?"

Some Truths from the Lessons We Have Been Studying

Paul came near degenerating into one of the worst persecutors of history. His fellowship with Jesus enabled him to develop into one of the greatest Christian leaders of all the centuries.

Through fellowship with Jesus, Paul developed the right kind of self-respect.

Because of the kind of teaching he had received in his early years, Paul had degenerated into a person of narrow and cruel spirit. After he became a Christian, he cast off these qualities of character and became broadly sympathetic.

Physical development has certain limitations beyond which it cannot go. If John the disciple had chosen to be an athlete, he might have developed a certain amount of strength and skill, but his accomplishment would have been limited and temporary. Old age would have been

inevitable for him, bringing the loss of physical power. He chose the way of spiritual development, and when he was nearly a hundred years old, he could say that he was just beginning a soul development which would make him more and more like his Master.

Review Questions

1. What is egotism? Show that Paul came near being an egotist.
2. Give evidence that Paul was intellectually and spiritually honest.
3. Name an incident in Paul's life which shows that he possessed wide sympathy.
4. Give reasons for believing that Paul was deeply in earnest.
5. Name incidents in the life of Paul which illustrate his courage.
6. What qualities are needed for true leadership?
7. Why are a person's ideas about God important?
8. Name some things which Paul evidently believed about God and show how these beliefs influenced his character.
9. What effect did a belief in the resurrection of Jesus have over Paul's character?
10. Show how all living things are apt to be either developing or degenerating.

Bible Verses

Gen. 1:26; Ps. 92:12-14; Hosea 14:5; Luke 11:24-26; Rom. 6:5, 6; Eph. 2:19-22; II Thess. 1:3; II Tim. 3:13; I Peter 2:1-3; II Peter 3:18.

Study Topics

1. The Perfect Development of the Boy Jesus. Luke 2:40.
2. The Perfect Development of Jesus in Young Manhood. Luke 2:52.
3. A Parable Which Pictures Soul Development. Mark 4:26-29.

4. The Spiritual Development of John the Disciple Under the Influence of Jesus.
5. How the Character of Judas Degenerated Even While He Was a Disciple.
6. How Jealousy Caused the Character of King Saul to Degenerate.
7. The Degenerate Religion of the Scribes and Pharisees. Matt. 23:23-28.
8. Paul's Longing for Spiritual Growth. Phil. 3:12-14.
9. Opportunities for the Development of Self-Control.
10. What a Person Must Do in Order to Develop a Spirit of Sympathy and Kindness.

The Lesson Truth Expressed in a Law

The Law of Spiritual Development and Spiritual Degeneration. The human spirit is almost inevitably developing into strength and purity or degenerating into weakness and impurity. Each person must choose for himself which way his soul is to move. Therefore:

1. We will from time to time examine our lives, seeking with God's help to discover which way we are moving in spiritual matters.
2. We will seek to avoid the dangers of degeneration which have so often proved spiritually disastrous to people who have lived before us.
3. We will seek the way of spiritual development which God has revealed through the life and teachings of Jesus.

Projects for Putting the Lesson Truths Into Practice

Have pupils make a list of things which lead to spiritual degeneration. (For example, jealousy, hatred, selfishness, impure thinking, hypocrisy, and the like.) Have the class compile a set of questions which a person might use in a spiritual self-examination. (For example: "Am I becoming kinder day by day? Am I gaining in self-control? Do I obey my parents and teachers more cheerfully and more promptly than I did a year ago?") If the teacher has won the confidence of pupils, personal interviews may be helpful.

Spiritual presence of Christ.

CHAPTER XXI

JESUS IN THE LIFE OF PAUL

WEEK DAY SESSION

A CONSTANT COMPANION AND FRIEND

I Cor. 1:9; Phil. 2:1-11; Col. 1:9-17

Just before his ascension Jesus told his disciples that he would be with them always. He did not mean that he would always be with them as a physical presence. He meant that he would be spiritually present. We cannot understand how Jesus can be present constantly with his followers all over the world, but we believe that he is present in this very way. We believe it because he said it, because there are evidences of his presence, and because it is possible to experience his constant presence. Paul believed in the continual presence of Jesus in his own life. He felt the presence of Jesus through all his toils and dangers. He saw evidences of the presence of Jesus in the lives of those who had become his followers.

It was the constant fellowship with Jesus that made Paul's life great and useful. It was Jesus who taught him how to serve his fellow men and how to win them to the higher life. It was Jesus who gave him his highest ideals concerning God. In Jesus he had come to know God as the loving Father. It may be helpful to set down in order what Jesus was to Paul, for it is possible for him to be to each one of us the constant Companion and Friend that he was to the great apostle.

Paul's Saviour. Rom. 5:10, 11; Gal. 2:20. Paul looked upon Jesus as the one who had redeemed his life from evil and destruction. He believed that it was Jesus who made it possible for him to be reconciled to God. He believed that Jesus had died on the cross that the world might be saved. Paul's constant attitude toward Jesus was, therefore, one of loving gratitude. Love of Jesus became the ruling passion of his life. It makes a vast difference what motives govern our actions. If we are

governed by bodily appetites, we must inevitably become brutish. If we are governed by selfish ambitions, we inevitably become narrow in our sympathies and spiritually blind to the greatest things in life. Paul's life was governed by love and gratitude, and these forces carried his character to heights of grandeur and to lasting usefulness.

Paul's Master. Rom. 1:1. Paul speaks of himself as the "servant" of Jesus. The Greek word which Paul used might have been translated "bond servant" or "slave." That was exactly what Paul meant. He thought of himself as belonging wholly to Jesus who had redeemed his life from sin and death. It is not good for any human being to be a mere servant to any other human being. No person can develop the highest type of character without personal freedom. With Jesus, the case is different. In becoming servants of Jesus we enter true freedom. In the service of Jesus, Paul developed into one of the greatest persons of history. This was because his fellowship with Jesus took from Paul's nature that which was selfish and base, and because the fellowship with Jesus helped all that was best in Paul's nature to come to full fruitage.

Paul's Teacher. Gal. 1:15-17. Paul tells us in his letter to the Galatians that he did not learn his gospel from "flesh and blood," and that after his conversion he did not go up to Jerusalem and become a pupil of the apostles. He tells us that he went away into Arabia, and we know that he must have remained there for a considerable time, perhaps for about three years. It is probable that during this time Paul was thinking out the great facts contained in the life and death and teachings of Jesus. He was during these years a pupil in the school of Jesus, and he was so ready to learn that he eventually grasped more of the truth of the Christian religion than any other man of his day.

Paul's schooling did not cease when he came back from Arabia. All his life he was a pupil of the great Teacher. The longer he lived the better he came to know his great Teacher. It was well for the Christian Church that Paul had come to know the mind of Christ so well.

We have seen how Paul saved the Church when it was almost ready to fall into errors which would have hindered its progress for centuries.

Paul's Guide. Acts 23:11. There came times when Paul had to make momentous decisions. We can note many times in his life when a wrong choice would have brought disasters to himself and to the cause he loved, but he seemed always to make the right decision. The explanation of his happy choices does not lie in the supposition that his own wisdom was always sufficient to make him choose the right pathway. It lies in the fact that he had a Guide who was ever present and whose counsels he had learned to obey. At the parting of the ways Paul heard the voice of Jesus saying to him, "This is the way, walk ye in it," and he obeyed the voice of his Guide.

Paul's Defender. II Tim. 4:16, 17. There were times when Paul felt as though Jesus was by his side as his Defender. When he had been mobbed and had barely escaped with his life in Jerusalem, he felt safe because Jesus had told him to be of good courage and that he must some day see Rome. In the midst of the shipwreck at Malta, Paul was the calmest and most useful man in the company, because he had faith in his great Defender who had promised him his life and the lives of all that were with him in the ship. At the beginning of his second trial in Rome, most of Paul's friends forsook him, but Paul was, for the time, saved because he had an unseen Defender of whom he could say, "The Lord stood by me, and strengthened me; . . . and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion."

What Paul Believed About Jesus. Phil. 2:1-11; Col. 1:9-17. From what has been said in the preceding paragraphs, we might justly conclude that Paul thought of Jesus as more than a merely human helper and friend. Fortunately, we are not left to mere conjectures as to what Paul thought about Jesus. He often speaks of Jesus in such a way that we know that he believed Jesus to be the Son of God. He calls Jesus "the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation." He says of Jesus, "In him were all things created, in the heavens

and upon the earth, things visible and things invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers; all things have been created through him, and unto him; and he is before all things, and in him all things consist." He says that Jesus existed in the form of God, but "emptied himself" and took on him "the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, becoming obedient even unto death, yea, the death of the cross."

Paul believed that Jesus died and that he rose again on the third day. He believed that Jesus would conquer the world and make it into the Kingdom of God. He declared that "in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things on earth and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

Salvation Through Faith. This study of what Jesus meant in the life of Paul ought to help us to understand the New Testament statement that we are saved by faith in Jesus. Paul especially emphasized this truth and we may believe that he knew it through personal experience. Paul's faith in Jesus as the Son of God and the Saviour of the world led him to accept Jesus as Master, Teacher, and Friend. Faith in Jesus thus opened up before Paul vast possibilities for spiritual development through fellowship with Jesus. The same way of salvation and spiritual development lies open to every individual and to all the world. It is thus that the world is to be redeemed and the Kingdom of God established, when people believe in Jesus and become his true pupils and his loyal followers.

"Behold, I stand at the door and knock: if any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me."

Suggestions for Notebook Work

For a closing essay in the notebooks some subject such as "Lessons I Have Learned from the Life of Paul" might be used. Closing Picture: I Am the Light of the World, by Holman Hunt, No. 93.

SUNDAY SESSION

"THE HIGH CALLING OF GOD IN CHRIST JESUS"

Phil. 3:14

"I press on toward the goal unto the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." Paul penned an explanation of his own wonderful life when he wrote these words. The verse mentions three persons: First of all, God the infinite Father, calling a man to the higher life; second, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and the instrument through which God calls to men; third, a man striving upward in answer to the voice of God in Jesus Christ. This is a picture of Paul's life. It is a picture of the life of every Christian who is day by day growing into the likeness of Jesus. Paul's statement is, therefore, one which concerns us all, and it may well be made the basis of the closing lesson in this book. To what does God call us in Jesus Christ? How can we answer this call of God? What will be the result if we hear and answer the call of God in Christ? These are some of the questions for which we are to seek an answer in the following paragraphs.

Through Jesus, God Calls All Mankind to a Better Understanding of Himself Than the World Has Ever Had Before. Other New Testament writers besides Paul have realized that, in Jesus, God was revealing himself to mankind in a new and clear way. John the disciple says, "And this is the message which we have heard from him and announce unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all." I John 1:5. The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews says, "God, having of old time spoken unto the fathers in the prophets by divers portions and in divers manners, hath at the end of these days spoken unto us in his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom also he made the worlds; who being the effulgence of his glory, and the very image of his substance, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had made purification of sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high." Heb. 1:1-3.

Mistaken ideas concerning the character of God have

been responsible for an immeasurable amount of suffering and loss in the world. Because pagan people know little about the God in whom "is no darkness at all" they worship idols of wood and stone and sometimes commit terrible acts in order to gain the favor of their gods of darkness. Paul had been taught in the best schools of the day, but his ideas of God were mixed with darkness until he came to know God as he was revealed to men in Jesus.

Men will never learn to be brothers until they come to know the God and Father of all men. The world brotherhood, in which there will be no war and no oppression, will be established as men come to know God as he is revealed by Jesus. Those who are trying to help their fellow men to become followers of Christ are, therefore, working for the coming of the day when God's will shall be done on earth as it is done in heaven.

Through Jesus, God Calls Us to an Understanding of Ourselves. Paul did not really know himself until he came to know Jesus. He thought that he was very righteous because he could repeat hundreds of pages from the law and the traditions of the rabbis. He felt that he was a great deal better than the common people who had no time to study the law and the interpretations of the law which had been made by the rabbis of the preceding centuries. He thought that he had reached, or nearly reached, the limits of religious experience and spiritual growth, when he had really hardly begun to grow at all. How changed was all this when Paul came to know Jesus, and thus to know himself! He no longer despised those who knew less about the law than he did. He saw that a knowledge of the law was of no value in itself. He lost the idea that he was nearly perfect and proclaimed himself less than the least of the apostles. He became full of a noble discontent with his spiritual condition and, counting himself not to have laid hold on the soul development which he saw to be possible, he began to press on toward the goal.

Through Jesus, God Calls Us to Service. Paul's first question after his conversion was, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" (A. V.) Up to that time service had not been Paul's aim. He had been thinking selfishly. He had

been trying to make himself one of the leading men of the Jewish religion. From the moment Paul came to know Jesus, not self but the service of his fellow men became his life goal.

A life dedicated to service usually means a life of self-sacrifice. Paul tells us that he suffered the loss of all things for the sake of becoming a follower of Jesus and for the sake of helping others to know about the religion of Jesus. Paul's great life task was revealed to him in rough outlines in the hour of his conversion. He saw the sublime possibilities in the power of the religion of Jesus to win the Gentile nations to a knowledge of the truth. He felt the call to devote his life to this great task.

Others besides Paul have been called of God in the same way. A humble cobbler in England came to know God as he is revealed in Jesus and, through his Son, God called that cobbler to become a missionary to India in an age when missionary effort was almost unknown. A Japanese boy found a fragment of the New Testament and learned to read it. That fragment told him something about Jesus. He came to know the Saviour of the world and, through his Son, God called the Japanese lad to establish a Christian college in Japan. So we might name hundreds of people who have lived great and useful lives and have accomplished great tasks and we might point out how Jesus was the inspiration and the guide to them in all that they accomplished; in other words, we would find that God called these people through his Son. Indeed, it is hard to see how God can call anyone to a truly great and useful life task in any other way.

Through His Son, God Calls Us to Become Like Himself. The goal and prize for which Paul was pressing on was the priceless possession of Christlike character. He had caught the idea that it was possible for him to become like his Master. He had come to see that it was vastly more important to be something than merely to have something. Paul felt that he had made so little progress toward the goal of Christlike character that he could not claim to have even laid hold, but as we study the life of the apostle we are able to put a more generous estimate on his spiritual growth.

Paul became more and more like Jesus in his purposes. He recalled a place in his experience where the establishment of God's Kingdom in the world was the great object of his life. In becoming like Jesus, Paul was becoming like God. Paul became more and more like Jesus in his sympathy. As a young man and a chief Pharisee, he was proud and cold. As an old man and a missionary, he was a friend to the Gentile and the slave whom he would have despised in his youthful days. Paul became more and more like Jesus in his purity of soul. He learned to rule his bodily appetites. In saying to young Timothy, "Keep thyself pure," he was not preaching that which he did not himself practice.

Other New Testament writers besides Paul have realized that this growth in Christlike character is one of the most precious inheritances of the Christian. John the apostle in writing on this subject said: "Beloved, now are we children of God, and it is not yet made manifest what we shall be. We know that, if he shall be manifested, we shall be like him; for we shall see him even as he is." I John 3:2.

Through Jesus, God Calls Us to Eternal Life. When speaking to God in that great prayer recorded in the seventeenth chapter of John, Jesus said, "And this is life eternal, that they should know thee the only true God, and him whom thou didst send, even Jesus Christ." In speaking of the eternal life which his disciples should gain through knowing God and himself, Jesus was thinking of something besides an endless life after death. He was evidently thinking of a life into which we gradually enter as we come to know God as he is revealed in his Son. So it is possible for men and women, boys and girls, to be constantly entering into eternal life here and now. As we come to know Jesus, and come to know God as Jesus reveals him to us, we are gaining qualities of character which will last forever; we are entering eternal life.

The Lesson Prayer

We thank thee, our Father in heaven, for the spiritual truths which we have learned as we have been studying

the life of Paul. We thank thee for the opportunity to make our lives count for righteousness and truth. We thank thee that we can know thee as thou art revealed in the life and teachings of Jesus, thy Son. Grant that all the world may come to know about the Saviour of mankind. Bless the missionaries who are teaching in pagan lands. Teach thy people to support this work generously with their money and their prayers. Help us to become like Jesus. Show us how to be like him in our homes, in school, and at play. We pray that our lives may be dedicated to the upbuilding of the Kingdom of justice and righteousness on earth. We ask these things in the name of Jesus. Amen.

SUPPLEMENTAL MISSIONARY STORY

"On the Desert Camel Trail." "The Book of Missionary Heroes," page 260.

EXPRESSIONAL SESSION

FELLOWSHIP WITH JESUS THE SUPREME NECESSITY IN A GREAT AND USEFUL LIFE

John 15:1-16

Our Scripture lesson is a part of the farewell discourse of Jesus with his disciples. He was leaving them a sublime task, a task which they could carry on only if they lived great and devoted lives. Jesus was giving his disciples his farewell lesson and it was a lesson on the importance of a close fellowship with himself. He taught these men that there could be no truly great and useful life for anyone unless that person lived in fellowship with the Saviour of men. Let us note a few of the truths which Jesus taught his disciples in this last lesson which he gave to them.

Cleanness. Jesus spoke first of cleanness of life. There can be no great and useful life if the life is not clean. "Every branch in me that beareth not fruit, he taketh it away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he cleanseth it, that it may bear more fruit. Already ye are clean because of the word which I have spoken unto you."

There can be no great and useful living if unclean thoughts occupy the mind, if unclean words are upon the tongue, if unclean acts are a part of one's activity.

Power. Jesus spoke of power. He told his disciples plainly that apart from him they could do nothing. His words are just as true for us as they were for his disciples. Apart from Jesus we cannot do anything that is really lasting and useful. Through fellowship with Jesus we lay hold upon limitless powers. "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatsoever ye will, and it shall be done unto you." We should remember that this is a conditional statement. We may ask what we will and it shall be done, if we abide in Jesus perfectly and his words abide fully in us.

Love. Love has been called "the greatest thing in the world." John went a step further and wrote, "God is love." The great and useful life is a life filled by love. It is through fellowship with Jesus that the life enters into a love like that of God. "Even as the Father hath loved me, I also have loved you: abide ye in my love."

Joy. A great and useful life attains a joy which is vastly above the joy which can be gained in selfish pleasure-seeking. We believe that the life of Jesus was a joyful life. Those who live in fellowship with Jesus enter into the joy of their Lord. "These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be made full."

Lasting Accomplishment. No life is truly great if it accomplishes nothing of lasting benefit. Napoleon realized this when he was a prisoner on the island of St. Helena and remembered that the empire which he had erected had fallen to pieces. Martyrs have gone gladly to death because they knew that they were lighting torches which could never be extinguished. "I shall not all die," was the triumphant statement of a poet who had written verses which he knew would be treasured forever. Jesus wished his disciples to live lives which would bring forth abiding results. He knew that this could be only as they had fellowship with him. "Ye did not choose me, but I chose you, and appointed you, that ye should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should abide."

Some Truths from the Lessons We Have Been Studying

All that Paul accomplished of real and lasting value was the result of his fellowship with Jesus. He could have done much harm without that fellowship but not any real and permanent good.

Paul was an obedient and willing pupil. He never reached the place where he ceased to learn from his great Teacher.

The closer and more constant our fellowship with Jesus, the greater and more useful our lives will be.

Review Questions

1. In what sense is Jesus always present with his followers?
2. Why is it important that our lives be filled with love and gratitude rather than with hatred and prejudice?
3. Why is it good for us to take Jesus as our Master?
4. Name instances in Paul's life when he was divinely guided.
5. What did Paul believe about Jesus?
6. What effect did these beliefs have on Paul's life and conduct?
7. Why is it important for us to have right ideas about God?
8. As we come to know about Jesus, does our acquaintance with him help us to understand ourselves better? Give proofs of your answer.
9. In what ways can we become like Christ?
10. Name some qualities of character which are developed through fellowship with Jesus.

Bible Verses

I Cor. 1:9; 12:27; Phil. 2:1, 2; 3:10; II Cor. 4:11; Col. 1:9, 10; 3:9, 10; I John 1:6, 7; 2:6.

Study Topics

1. What Fellowship with Jesus Did for John the Disciple.
2. What Fellowship with Jesus Did for Peter.

3. What One Day's Fellowship with Jesus Did for a Publican. Luke 19:1-10.
4. Why Being a Disciple of Jesus Did Not Make the Life of Judas Great and Useful.
5. What Fellowship with Jesus Did for Matthew.
6. What We Must Do in Order that We May Have Fellowship with Jesus.
7. Is Fellowship with Jesus Possible Through Church Fellowship? Matt. 18:20.
8. Fellowship with Jesus Found in Serving Our Fellow Men. Matt. 25:34-40.
9. Why Fellowship with Jesus Helps a Person to Live a Great and Useful Life.
10. What Jesus Meant When He Said, "I Am with You Always."

The Lesson Truth Expressed in a Law

The Law of Divine Fellowship. Those who have lived great and useful lives have had fellowship with God through his Son. We desire that our lives may be great and useful. Therefore:

1. We will strive to live the Christian life, knowing that if we walk in the light as God is in the light, we shall have fellowship with him in his Son.
2. We will seek fellowship with Jesus by being faithful members of his Church, thus entering into the fellowship of worship with the people of God.
3. We will seek fellowship with Jesus by entering into the service of our fellow men, knowing that thus we are working for him and with him.

(To be used in a Decision-Day service and subscribed to by all pupils willing to accept Christ and unite with the Church.)

Projects for Putting the Lesson Truths Into Practice

Make this closing meeting of the course a Decision Day in which pupils are given an opportunity to confess their faith in Christ, unite with the Church, reconsecrate themselves to the Christian life, or enlist in some form of active Christian service.

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